RUDYARD KIPLING

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Departmental ditties,
ballads, and other verses

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THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES, BALLADS AND OTHER VERSES

THE PHANTOM RICKSHAW

By
Rudyard Kipling

LONDON
CLASSIC PUBLISHING COMPANY
NEW YORK

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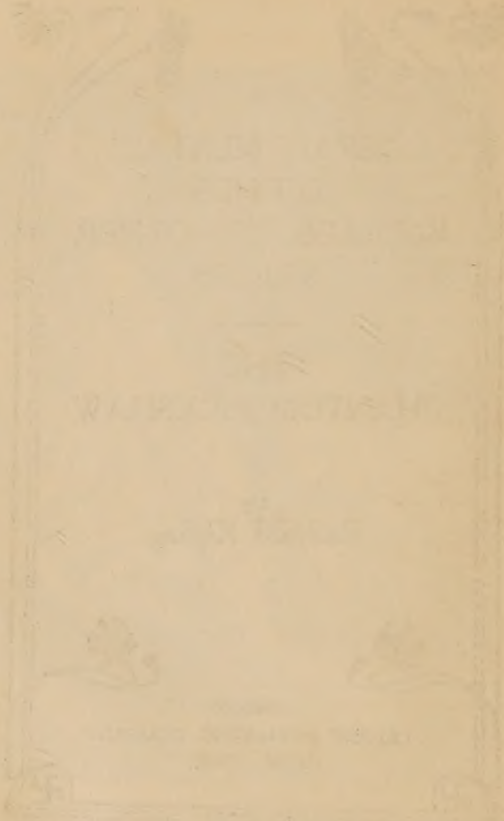

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I HAVE eaten your bread and salt,
I have drunk your water and wine,
The deaths ye died I have watched beside,
And the lives that ye led were mine.

Was there aught that I did not share
In vigil or toil or ease,—
One joy or woe that I did not know,
Dear hearts across the seas?

I have written the tale of our life
For a sheltered people's mirth,
In jesting guise—but ye are wise,
And ye know what the jest is worth.

GENERAL SUMMARY

We are very slightly changed
From the semi-apes who ranged
India's prehistoric clay;
Whoso drew the longest bow,
Ran his brother down, you know,
As we run men down to-day.

"Dowb," the first of all his race,
Met the Mammoth face to face
On the lake or in the cave,
Stole the steadiest canoe,
Ate the quarry others slew,
Died—and took the finest grave.

When they scratched the reindeer-bone,
Some one made the sketch his own,
Filched it from the artist—then,
Even in those early days,
Won a simple Viceroy's praise
Through the toil of other men.

Ere they hewed the Sphinx's visage
Favoritism governed kissage,
Even as it does in this age.

Who shall doubt the secret hid
Under Cheops' pyramid
Was that the contractor did
  Cheops out of several millions?
Or that Joseph's sudden rise
To Comptroller of Supplies
Was a fraud of monstrous size
  On King Pharaoh's swart Civilians?

Thus, the artless songs I sing
Do not deal with anything
  New or never said before.
As it was in the beginning,
Is to-day official sinning,
  And shall be for evermore.

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

ARMY HEADQUARTERS

OLD is the song that I sing—
Old as my unpaid bills—
Old is the chicken that *kitmutgars* bring
Men at dâk-bungalows—old as the Hills.

AHASUERUS JENKINS of the "Operatic Own"
Was dowered with a tenor voice of *super*-Santley tone.
His views on equitation were, perhaps, a trifle queer;
He had no seat worth mentioning, but oh! he had an ear.
He clubbed his wretched company a dozen times a day,
He used to quit his charger in a parabolic way,
His method of saluting was the joy of all beholders,
But Ahasuerus Jenkins had a head upon his shoulders.
He took two months to Simla when the year was at the spring,
And underneath the deodars eternally did sing.
He warbled like a *bulbul*, but particularly at
Cornelia Agrippina who was musical and fat.

She controlled a humble husband, who, in turn, controlled a Dept.,
Where Cornelia Agrippina's human singing-birds were kept
From April to October on a plump retaining fee,
Supplied, of course, *per mensem*, by the Indian Treasury.
Cornelia used to sing with him, and Jenkins used to play;
He praised unblushingly her notes, for he was false as they:
So when the winds of April turned the budding roses brown,
Cornelia told her husband:—"Tom, you mustn't send him down."
They haled him from his regiment which didn't much regret him;
They found for him an office-stool, and on that stool they set him,
To play with maps and catalogues three idle hours a day,
And draw his plump retaining fee—which means his double pay.

Now, ever after dinner, when the coffee-cups are brought,
Ahasuerus waileth o'er the grand pianoforte;
And, thanks to fair Cornelia, his fame hath waxen great,
And Ahasuerus Jenkins is a power in the State.

STUDY OF AN ELEVATION, IN INDIAN INK

THIS ditty is a string of lies.
But—how the deuce did Gubbins rise?

POTIPHAR GUBBINS, C. E.,
Stands at the top of a tree;
And I muse on my bed on the reasons that led
To the hoisting of Potiphar G.

Potiphar Gubbins, C. E.,
Is seven years junior to me;
Each bridge that he makes he either buckles or breaks,
And his work is as rough as he.

Potiphar Gubbins, C. E.,
Is coarse as a chimpanzee;
And I can't understand why you gave him your hand
Lovely Mehitabel Lee.

Potiphar Gubbins, C. E.,
Is dear to the Powers that Be;
For They bow and They smile in an affable style
Which is seldom accorded to Me.

Potiphar Gubbins, C. E.,
Is certain as certain can be
Of a highly-paid post which is claimed by a host
Of seniors—including Me.

Careless and lazy is he,
Greatly inferior to Me.
What is the spell that you manage so well,
Commonplace Potiphar G.?

Lovely Mehitabel Lee,
Let me inquire of thee,
Should I have riz to what Potiphar is,
Hadst thou been mated to Me?

A LEGEND OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE

THIS is the reason why Rustum Beg,
Rajah of Kolazai,
Drinketh the "simpkin" and brandy peg,
Maketh the money to fly,
Vexeth a Government, tender and kind,
Also—but this is a detail—blind.

RUSTUM BEG of Kolazai—slightly backward native state—
Lusted for a C. S. I.,—so began to sanitate.
Built a Jail and Hospital—nearly built a City drain—
Till his faithful subjects all thought their ruler was insane.

Strange departures made he then—yea, Departments stranger still,
Half a dozen Englishmen helped the Rajah with a will,
Talked of noble aims and high, hinted of a future fine
For the State of Kolazai, on a strictly Western line.

Rajah Rustum held his peace; lowered octroi
dues a half;
Organized a State Police; purified the Civil
Staff;
Settled cess and tax afresh in a very liberal
way;
Cut temptations of the flesh—also cut the
Bukhshi's pay;

Roused his Secretariat to a fine Mahratta fury,
By a Hookum hinting a supervision of *dasturi;*
Turned the State of Kolazai very nearly
upside-down;
When the end of May was nigh, waited his
achievement crown.
Then the Birthday Honors came. Sad to
state and sad to see,
Stood against the Rajah's name nothing more
than *C. I. E.!*

. . . . .

Things were lively for a week in the State of
Kolazai.
Even now the people speak of that time re-
gretfully.
How he disendowed the Jail—stopped at once
the City drain;
Turned to beauty fair and frail—got his senses
back again;
Doubled taxes, cesses, all; cleared away each
new-built *thana;*
Turned the two-lakh Hospital into a superb
Zenana;

Heaped upon the Bukhshi Sahib wealth and
honors manifold;
Clad himself in Eastern garb—squeezed his
people as of old.
Happy, happy Kolazai! Never more will Rus-
tum Beg
Play to catch the Viceroy's eye. He prefers
the "simpkin" peg.

THE STORY OF URIAH

"Now there were two men in one city; the one rich and the other poor."

Jack Barrett went to Quetta
Because they told him to.
He left his wife at Simla
On three-fourths his monthly screw:
Jack Barrett died at Quetta
Ere the next month's pay he drew.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta.
He didn't understand
The reason of his transfer
From the pleasant mountain-land:
The season was September,
And it killed him out of hand.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta,
And there gave up the ghost,
Attempting two men's duty
In that very healthy post;
And Mrs. Barrett mourned for him
Five lively months at most.

Jack Barrett's bones at Quetta
Enjoy profound repose;
But I shouldn't be astonished
If *now* his spirit knows
The reason of his transfer
From the Himalayan snows.

And, when the Last Great Bugle Call
Adown the Hurnai throbs,
When the last grim joke is entered
In the big black Book of Jobs,
And Quetta graveyards give again
Their victims to the air,
I shouldn't like to be the man
Who sent Jack Barrett there.

THE POST THAT FITTED

THOUGH tangled and twisted the course of true love,
This ditty explains.
No tangle's so tangled it cannot improve
If the Lover has brains.

ERE the steamer bore him Eastward, Sleary was engaged to marry
An attractive girl at Tunbridge, whom he called "my little Carrie."
Sleary's pay was very modest; Sleary was the other way.
Who can cook a two-plate dinner on eight paltry dibs a day?

Long he pondered o'er the question in his
scantly furnished quarters—
Then proposed to Minnie Boffkin, eldest of
Judge Boffkin's daughters.
Certainly an impecunious Subaltern was not
a catch,
But the Boffkins knew that Minnie mightn't
make another match.

So they recognized the business, and, to feed
and clothe the bride,
Got him made a Something Something some-
where on the Bombay side.
Anyhow, the billet carried pay enough for him
to marry—
As the artless Sleary put it :—"Just the thing
for me and Carrie."

Did he, therefore, jilt Miss Boffkin—impulse
of a baser mind?
No! He started epileptic fits of an appalling
kind.
(Of his *modus operandi* only this much I could
gather :—
"Pears' shaving sticks will give you little taste
and lots of lather.")

Frequently in public places his affliction used
to smite
Sleary with distressing vigor—always in the
Boffkins' sight.
Ere a week was over Minnie weepingly re-
turned his ring,
Told him his "unhappy weakness" stopped
all thought of marrying.

Sleary bore the information with a chastened
holy joy,—
Epileptic fits don't matter in Political em-
ploy,—
Wired three short words to Carrie—took his
ticket, packed his kit—
Bade farewell to Minnie Boffkin in one last,
long, lingering fit.

Four weeks later, Carrie Sleary read—and
laughed until she wept—
Mrs. Boffkin's warning letter on the "wretched
epilept."
Year by year, in pious patience, vengeful Mrs.
Boffkin sits
Waiting for the Sleary babies to develop
Sleary's fits.

PUBLIC WASTE

WALPOLE talks of "a man and his price."
List to a ditty queer—
The sale of a Deputy-Acting-Vice.
Resident-Engineer,
Bought like a bullock, hoof and hide,
By the Little Tin Gods on the Mountain Side.

By the Laws of the Family Circle 'tis written
in letters of brass
That only a Colonel from Chatham can man-
age the Railways of State,
Because of the gold on his breeks, and the
subjects wherein he must pass;
Because in all matters that deal not with Rail-
ways his knowledge is great.

Now Exeter Battleby Tring had labored from boyhood to eld
On the Lines of the East and the West, and eke of the North and South;
Many Lines had he built and surveyed—important the posts which he held;
And the Lords of the Iron Horse were dumb when he opened his mouth.

Black as the raven his garb, and his heresies jettier still—
Hinting that Railways required lifetimes of study and knowledge;
Never clanked sword by his side—Vauban he knew not, nor drill—
Nor was his name on the list of the men who had passed through the "College."

Wherefore the Little Tin Gods harried their little tin souls,
Seeing he came not from Chatham, jingled no spurs at his heels,
Knowing that, nevertheless, was he first on the Government rolls
For the billet of "Railway Instructor to Little Tin Gods on Wheels."

Letters not seldom they wrote him, "having the honor to state,"
It would be better for all men if he were laid on the shelf:
Much would accrue to his bank-book, and he consented to wait
Until the Little Tin Gods built him a berth for himself.

"Special, well paid, and exempt from the Law of the Fifty and Five,
Even to Ninety and Nine"—these were the terms of the pact:
Thus did the Little Tin Gods (long may Their Highnesses thrive!)
Silence his mouth with rupees, keeping their Circle intact;

Appointing a Colonel from Chatham who managed the Bahamo State Line,
(The which was one mile and one furlong—a guaranteed twenty-inch gauge).
So Exeter Battelby Tring consented his claims to resign,
And died, on four thousand a month, in the ninetieth year of his age.

DELILAH

We have another Viceroy now, those days are dead and done,
Of Delilah Aberyswith and depraved Ulysses Gunne.

Delilah Aberyswith was a lady—not too young—
With a perfect taste in dresses, and a badly-bitted tongue,
With a thirst for information, and a greater thirst for praise,
And a little house in Simla, in the Prehistoric Days.

By reason of her marriage to a gentleman in power,
Delilah was acquainted with the gossip of the hour;
And many little secrets, of a half-official kind,
Were whispered to Delilah, and she bore them all in mind.

She patronized extensively a man, Ulysses Gunne,
Whose mode of earning money was a low and shameful one.
He wrote for divers papers, which, as everybody knows,
Is worse than serving in a shop or scaring off the crows.

He praised her "queenly beauty" first: and, later on, he hinted
At the "vastness of her intellect" with compliment unstinted.
He went with her a-riding, and his love for her was such
That he lent her all his horses, and—she galled them very much.

One day, THEY brewed a secret of a fine financial sort;
It related to Appointments, to a Man and a Report.
'Twas almost worth the keeping (only seven people knew it),
And Gunne rose up to seek the truth and patiently ensue it.

It was a Viceroy's Secret, but—perhaps the wine was red—
Perhaps an Aged Councilor had lost his aged head—
Perhaps Delilah's eyes were bright—Delilah's whispers sweet—
The Aged Member told her what 'twere treason to repeat.

Ulysses went a-riding, and they talked of love and flowers;
Ulysses went a-calling, and he called for several hours;
Ulysses went a-waltzing, and Delilah helped him dance—
Ulysses let the waltzes go, and waited for his chance.

The summer sun was setting, and the summer air was still,
The couple went a-walking in the shade of Summer Hill,
The wasteful sunset faded out in turkis-green and gold,
Ulysses pleaded softly, and . . . that bad Delilah told!

Next morn, a startled Empire learnt the all-important news;
Next week, the Aged Councilor was shaking in his shoes;
Next month, I met Delilah, and she did not show the least
Hesitation in affirming that Ulysses was a "beast."

. . . . . .

We have another Viceroy now, those days are dead and done,
Of Delilah Aberyswith and most mean Ulysses Gunne!

WHAT HAPPENED

Hurree Chunder Mookerjee, pride of Bow Bazar,
Owner of a native press, "Barrishter-at-Lar,"
Waited on the Government with a claim to wear
Sabers by the bucketful, rifles by the pair.

Then the Indian Government winked a wicked wink,
Said to Chunder Mookerjee: "Stick to pen and ink,
They are safer implements; but, if you insist,
We will let you carry arms wheresoe'er you list."

Hurree Chunder Mookerjee sought the gunsmith and
Bought the tuber of Lancaster, Ballard, Dean, and Bland.
Bought a shiny bowie-knife, bought a town-made sword,
Jingled like a carriage-horse when he went abroad.

But the Indian Government, always keen to
please,
Also gave permission to horrid men like these—
Yar Mahommed Yusufzai, down to kill or
steal,
Chimbu Singh from Bikaneer, Tantia the Bhil.

Killar Khan the Marri chief, Jowar Singh the
Sikh,
Nubbee Baksh Punjabi Jat, Abdul Huq
Rafiq—
He was a Wahabi ; last, little Boh Hla-oo
Took advantage of the act—took a Snider too.

They were unenlightened men, Ballard knew
them not,
They procured their swords and guns chiefly
on the spot,
And the lore of centuries, plus a hundred
fights,
Made them slow to disregard one another's
rights.

With a unanimity dear to patriot hearts
All those hairy gentlemen out of foreign parts
Said: "The good old days are back—let us
go to war!"
Swaggered down the Grand Trunk Road, into
Bow Bazar.

Nubbee Baksh Punjabi Jat found a hide-bound
flail,
Chimbu Singh from Bikaneer oiled his Tonk
jezail,

Yar Mahommed Yusufzai spat and grinned with glee
As he ground the butcher-knife of the Khyberee.

Jowar Singh the Sikh procured saber, quoit, and mace,
Abdul Huq, Wahabi, took the dagger from its place,

While amid the jungle-grass danced and grinned and jabbered
Little Boh Hla-oo and cleared the dah-blade from the scabbard.

What became of Mookerjee? Soothly, who can say?
Yar Mahommed only grins in a nasty way,
Jowar Singh is reticent, Chimbu Singh is mute,
But the belts of them all simply bulge with loot.

What became of Ballard's guns? Afghans black and grubby
Sell them for their silver weight to the men of Pubbi;
And the shiny bowie-knife and the town-made sword are
Hanging in a Marri camp just across the Border.

What became of Mookerjee? Asl: Mahommed Yar
Prodding Siva's sacred bull down the Bow Bazar.
Speak to placid Nubbee Baksh—question land and sea—
Ask the Indian Congress men—only don't ask me!

PINK DOMINOES.

"THEY are fools who kiss and tell"
Wisely has the poet sung.
Man may hold all sorts of posts
If he'll only hold his tongue.

JENNY and Me were engaged, you see,
On the eve of the Fancy Ball;
So a kiss or two was nothing to you
Or any one else at all.

Jenny would go in a domino—
Pretty and pink but warm;
While I attended, clad in a splendid
Austrian uniform.

Now we had arranged, through notes exchanged
Early that afternoon,
At Number Four to waltz no more,
But to sit in the dusk and spoon.

(I wish you to see that Jenny and Me
Had barely exchanged our troth;
So a kiss or two was strictly due
By, from, and between us both.)

When Three was over, an eager lover,
I fled to the gloom outside;
And a Domino came out also
Whom I took for my future bride.

That is to say, in a casual way,
I slipped my arm around her;
With a kiss or two (which is nothing to you),
And ready to kiss I found her.

She turned her head, and the name she said
Was certainly not my own;
But ere I could speak, with a smothered shriek
She fled and left me alone.

Then Jenny came, and I saw with shame
She'd doffed her domino;
And I had embraced an alien waist—
But I did not tell her so.

Next morn I knew that there were two
Dominoes pink, and one
Had cloaked the spouse of Sir Julian Vouse,
Our big political gun.

Sir J. was old, and her hair was gold,
And her eye was a blue cerulean;
And the name she said when she turned her head
Was not in the least like "Julian."

Now wasn't it nice, when want of *pie*
Forbade us twain to marry,
That old Sir J., in the kindest way,
Made me his Secre*tarry?*

THE MAN WHO COULD WRITE

SHUN—shun the Bowl! That fatal, facile drink
Has ruined many geese who dipped their quills in't
Bribe, murder, marry, but steer clear of ink
Save when you write receipts for paid-up bills in't.
There may be silver in the "blue-black"—all
I know of is the iron and the gall.

BOANERGES BLITZEN, servant of the Queen,
Is a dismal failure—is a Might-have-been.
In a luckless moment he discovered men
Rise to high position through a ready pen.

Boanerges Blitzen argued, therefore: "I
With the selfsame weapon can attain as high."
Only he did not possess, when he made the trial,
Wicked wit of C–lv–n, irony of L——l.

(Men who spar with Government need, to back their blows,
Something more than ordinary journalistic prose.)

Never young Civilian's prospects were so bright,
Till an Indian paper found that he could write:

Never young Civilian's prospects were so dark,
When the wretched Blitzen wrote to make his mark.

Certainly he scored it, bold and black and firm,
In that Indian paper—made his seniors squirm,
Quoted office scandals, wrote the tactless truth—
Was there ever known a more misguided youth?

When the Rag he wrote for praised his plucky game,
Boanerges Blitzen felt that this was Fame:
When the men he wrote of shook their heads and swore,
Boanerges Blitzen only wrote the more.

Posed as young Ithuriel, resolute and grim,
Till he found promotion didn't come to him;
Till he found that reprimands weekly were his lot,
And his many Districts curiously hot.

Till he found his furlough strangely hard to win,
Boanerges Blitzen didn't care a pin:
Then it seemed to dawn on him something wasn't right—
Boanerges Blitzen put it down to "spite."

Languished in a District desolate and dry;
Watched the Local Government yearly pass him by;
Wondered where the hitch was; called it most unfair.

. . . . .

That was seven years ago—and he still is there.

MUNICIPAL

"WHY is my District death-rate low?"
Said Binks of Hezabad.
"Wells, drains, and sewage-outfalls are
My own peculiar fad.
I learned a lesson once. It ran
"Thus," quoth that most veracious man:—

IT was an August evening, and, in snowy garments clad,
I paid a round of visits in the lines of Hezabad;
When, presently, my Waler saw, and did not like at all,
A commissariat elephant careering down the Mall.

I couldn't see the driver, and across my mind it rushed
That that Commissariat elephant had suddenly gone *musth*.

I didn't care to meet him, and I couldn't well
get down,
So I let the Waler have it, and we headed for
the town.

The buggy was a new one, and, praise Dykes,
it stood the strain,
Till the Waler jumped a bullock just above
the City Drain;
And the next that I remember was a hur-
ricane of squeals,
And the creature making toothpicks of my
five-foot patent wheels.

He seemed to want the owner, so I fled, dis-
traught with fear,
To the Main Drain sewage-outfall while he
snorted in my ear—
Reached the four-foot drain-head safely, and,
in darkness and despair,
Felt the brute's proboscis fingering my terror-
stiffened hair.

Heard it trumpet on my shoulder—tried to
crawl a little higher—
Found the Main Drain sewage-outfall blocked,
some eight feet up, with mire;
And, for twenty reeking minutes, Sir, my very
marrow froze,
While the trunk was feeling blindly for a pur-
chase on my toes!

It missed me by a fraction, but my hair was
turning gray
Before they called the drivers up and dragged
the brute away.

Then I sought the City Elders, and my words were very plain.
They flushed that four-foot drain-head, and —it never choked again.

You may hold with surface-drainage, and the sun-for-garbage cure,
Till you've been a periwinkle shrinking coyly up a sewer.
I believe in well-flushed culverts . . . .
This is why the death-rate's small;
And, if you don't believe me, get *shikarred* yourself. That's all.

A CODE OF MORALS

LEST you should think this story true,
I merely mention I
Evolved it lately. 'Tis a most
Unmitigated misstatement.

Now Jones had left his new-wed bride to keep his house in order,
And hied away to the Hurrum Hills above the Afghan border,
To sit on a rock with a heliograph; but ere he left he taught
His wife the working of the Code that sets the miles at naught.

And Love had made him very sage, as Nature made her fair;
So Cupid and Apollo linked, *per* heliograph, the pair.

At dawn, across the Hurrum Hills, he flashed
her counsel wise—
At e'en, the dying sunset bore her husband's
homilies.

He warned her 'gainst seductive youths in
scarlet clad and gold,
As much as 'gainst the blandishments paternal
of the old;
But kept his gravest warnings for (hereby the
ditty hangs)
That snowy-haired Lothario, Lieutenant-
General Bangs.

'Twas General Bangs, with Aide and Staff,
that tittupped on the way,
When they beheld a heliograph tempestuously
at play;
They thought of Border risings, and of stations
sacked and burnt—
So stopped to take the message down—and
this is what they learnt:—

"Dash dot dot, dot, dot dash, dot dash dot"
twice. The General swore.
"Was ever General Officer addressed as 'dear'
before?
'My Love,' i' faith! 'My Duck,' Gadzooks!
'My darling popsy-wop!'
Spirit of great Lord Wolseley, *who* is on that
mountain top?"

The artless Aide-de-camp was mute; the gilded Staff were still,
As, dumb with pent-up mirth, they booked that message from the hill;
For, clear as summer's lightning flare, the husband's warning ran:—
"Don't dance or ride with General Bangs—a most immoral man."

(At dawn, across the Hurrum Hills, he flashed her counsel wise—
But, howsoever Love be blind, the world at large hath eyes.)
With damnatory dot and dash he heliographed his wife
Some interesting details of the General's private life.

The artless Aide-de-camp was mute; the shining Staff were still,
And red and ever redder grew the General's shaven gill.
And this is what he said at last (his feelings matter not):—
"I think we've tapped a private line. Hi! Threes about there! Trot!"

All honor unto Bangs, for ne'er did Jones thereafter know,
By word or act official who read off that helio.;
But the tale is on the Frontier, and from Michni to Mool*tan*
They know the worthy General as "that most immoral man."

THE LAST DEPARTMENT

TWELVE hundred million men are spread
About this Earth, and I and You
Wonder, when You and I are dead,
What will those luckless millions do?

"NONE whole or clean," we cry, "or free from stain
Of favor." Wait awhile, till we attain
The Last Department, where nor fraud nor fools,
Nor grade nor greed, shall trouble us again.

Fear, Favor, or Affection—what are these
To the grim Head who claims our services?
I never knew a wife or interest yet
Delay that *pukka* step, miscalled "decease;"

When leave, long over-due, none can deny;
When idleness of all Eternity
Becomes our furlough, and the marigold
Our thriftless, bullion-minting Treasury.

Transferred to the Eternal Settlement,
Each in his strait, wood-scantled office pent,
No longer Brown reverses Smith's appeals,
Or Jones records his Minute of Dissent.

And One, long since a pillar of the Court,
As mud between the beams thereof is wrought;
And One who wrote on phosphates for the crops
Is subject-matter of his own Report.

(These be the glorious ends whereto we pass—
Let Him who Is, go call on Him who Was;
And He shall see the *mallie* steals the slab
For currie-grinder, and for goats the grass.)

A breath of wind, a Border bullet's flight,
A draught of water, or a horse's fright—
The droning of the fat *Sheristadar*
Ceases, the punkah stops, and falls the night.

For you or Me. Do those who live decline
The step that offers, or their work resign?
Trust me, To-day's Most Indispensables,
Five hundred men can take your place or mine.

BALLADS

THE BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come from the ends of the earth!

Kamal is out with twenty men to raise the Border side,
And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is the Colonel's pride:
He has lifted her out of the stable-door between the dawn and the day,
And turned the calkins upon her feet, and ridden her far away.
Then up and spoke the Colonel's son that led a troop of the Guides:
"Is there never a man of all my men can say where Kamal hides?"
Then up and spoke Mahommed Khan, the son of the Ressaldar,
"If ye know the track of the morning-mist, ye know where his pickets are.

At dusk he harries the Abazai—at dawn he is into Bonair,
But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his own place to fare,
So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as a bird can fly,
By the favor of God ye may cut him off ere he win to the Tongue of Jagai,
But if he be passed the Tongue of Jagai, right swiftly turn ye then,
For the length and the breadth of that grisly plain is sown with Kamal's men.
There is rock to the left, and rock to the right, and low lean thorn between,
And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick where never a man is seen."
The Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a raw rough dun was he,
With the mouth of a bell and the heart of Hell, and the head of the gallows-tree.
The Colonel's son to the Fort has won, they bid him stay to eat—
Who rides at the tail of a Border thief, he sits not long at his meat.
He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as fast as he can fly,
Till he was aware of his father's mare in the gut of the Tongue of Jagai,
Till he was aware of his father's mare with Kamal upon her back,
And when he could spy the white of her eye, he made the pistol crack.
He has fired once, he has fired twice, but the whistling ball went wide.

"Ye shoot like a soldier," Kamal said.
"Show now if ye can ride."
It's up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as blown
dust-devils go,
The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the
mare like a barren doe.
The dun he leaned against the bit and slugged
his head above,
But the red mare played with the snaffle-bars,
as a maiden plays with a glove.
There was rock to the left and rock to the
right, and low lean thorn between,
And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick tho'
never a man was seen.
They have ridden the low moon out of the
sky, their hoofs drum up the dawn,
The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the
mare like a new-roused fawn.
The dun he fell at a water-course—in a woful
heap fell he,
And Kamal has turned the red mare back,
and pulled the rider free.
He has knocked the pistol out of his hand—
small room was there to strive,
"'Twas only by favor of mine," quoth he, "ye
rode so long alive:
There was not a rock of twenty mile, there
was not a clump of tree,
But covered a man of my own men with his
rifle cocked on his knee.
If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have
held it low,
The little jackals that flee so fast, were feast-
ing all in a row:

If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I
have held it high,
The kite that whistles above us now were
gorged till she could not fly."
Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "Do
good to bird and beast,
But count who come for the broken meats
before thou makest a feast.
If there should follow a thousand swords to
carry my bones away,
Belike the price of a jackal's meal were more
than a thief could pay.
They will feed their horse on the standing
crop, their men on the garnered grain,
The thatch of the byres will serve their
fires when all the cattle are slain.
But if thou thinkest the price be fair,—thy
brethren wait to sup,
The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn,—howl,
dog, and call them up!
And if thou thinkest the price be high, in
steer and gear and stack,
Give me my father's mare again, and I'll fight
my own way back!"
Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set
him upon his feet.
"No talk shall be of dogs," said he, "when
wolf and gray wolf meet.
May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in deed
or breath;
What dam of lances brought thee forth to jest
at the dawn with Death?"
Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "I hold
by the blood of my clan:

Take up the mare of my father's gift—by God, she has carried a man!"
The red mare ran to the Colonel's son, and nuzzled against his breast,
"We be two strong men," said Kamal then, "but she loveth the younger best.
So she shall go with a lifter's dower, my turquoise-studded rein,
My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and silver stirrups twain."
The Colonel's son a pistol drew and held it muzzle-end,
"Ye have taken the one from a foe," said he; "will ye take the mate from a friend?"
"A gift for a gift," said Kamal straight; "a limb for the risk of a limb.
Thy father has sent his son to me, I'll send my son to him!"
With that he whistled his only son, that dropped from a mountain-crest—
He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and he looked like a lance in rest.
"Now here is thy master," Kamal said, "who leads a troop of the Guides,
And thou must ride at his left side as shield on shoulder rides.
Till Death or I cut loose the tie, at camp and board and bed,
Thy life is his—thy fate is to guard him with thy head.
So thou must eat the White Queen's meat, and all her foes are thine,
And thou must harry thy father's hold for the peace of the Border-line,

And thou must make a trooper tough and hack
thy way to power—
Belike they will raise thee to Ressaldar when
I am hanged in Peshawur."
They have looked each other between the eyes,
and there they found no fault,
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-
Blood on leavened bread and salt:
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-
Blood on fire and fresh-cut sod,
On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber knife,
and the wondrous Names of God.
The Colonel's son he rides the mare and Ka-
mal's boy the dun,
And two have come back to Fort Bukloh where
there went forth but one.
And when they drew to the Quarter-Guard,
full twenty swords flew clear—
There was not a man but carried his feud with
the blood of the mountaineer.
"Ha' done! ha' done!" said the Colonel's
son. "Put up the steel at your sides!
Last night ye had struck at a Border thief—
to-night 'tis a man of the Guides!"

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the two
shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great
Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed,
nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come
from the ends of the earth.

THE LAST SUTTEE

NOT many years ago a King died in one of the Rajpoot States. His wives, disregarding the orders of the English against suttee, would have broken out of the palace had not the gates been barred. But one of them disguised as the King's favorite dancing-girl, passed through the line of guards and reached the pyre. There, her courage failing, she prayed her cousin, a baron of the court, to kill her. This he did, not knowing who she was.

UDAI CHAND lay sick to death
In his hold by Gungra hill.
All night we heard the death-gongs ring
For the soul of the dying Rajpoot King,
All night beat up from the women's wing
A cry that we could not still.

All night the barons came and went,
The lords of the outer guard:
All night the cressets glimmered pale
On Ulwar saber and Tonk jezail,
Mewar headstall and Marwar mail,
That clinked in the palace yard.

In the Golden room on the palace roof
All night he fought for air:
And there was sobbing behind the screen,
Rustle and whisper of women unseen,
And the hungry eyes of the Boondi Queen
On the death she might not share.

He passed at dawn—the death-fire leaped
From ridge to river-head,
From the Malwa plains to the Abu scaurs:
And wail upon wail went up to the stars
Behind the grim zenana-bars,
When they knew that the King was dead.

The dumb priest knelt to tie his mouth
And robe him for the pyre.
The Boondi Queen beneath us cried:
"See, now, that we die as our mothers died
In the bridal-bed by our master's side!
Out, women!—to the fire!"

We drove the great gates home apace:
White hands were on the sill:
But ere the rush of the unseen feet
Had reached the turn to the open street,
The bars shot down, the guard-drum beat—
We held the dove-cot still.

A face looked down in the gathering day,
And laughing spoke from the wall:
Ohé they mourn here: let me by—
Azizun, the Lucknow nautch-girl, I?
When the house is rotten, the rats must fly,
And I seek another thrall.

"For I ruled the King as ne'er did Queen,
"To-night the Queens rule me!
Guard them safely, but let me go,
Or ever they pay the debt they owe
In scourge and torture!" She leaped below,
And the grim guard watched her flee.

They knew that the King had spent his soul
On a North-bred dancing-girl:
That he prayed to a flat-nosed Lucknow god,
And kissed the ground where her feet had trod,
And doomed to death at her drunken nod
And swore by her lightest curl.

We bore the King to his fathers' place,
Where the tombs of the Sun-born stand:
Where the gray apes swing, and the peacocks preen
On fretted pillar and jeweled screen,
And the wild boar couch in the house of the Queen
On the drift of the desert sand.

The herald read his titles forth,
We set the logs aglow:
"Friend of the English, free from fear,
Baron of Luni to Jeysulmeer,
Lord of the Desert of Bikaneer,
King of the Jungle,—go!"

All night the red flames stabbed the sky
With wavering wind-tossed spears:
And out of a shattered temple crept
A woman who veiled her head and wept,
And called on the King—but the great King slept,
And turned not for her tears.

Small thought had he to mark the strife—
Cold fear with hot desire—
When thrice she leaped from the leaping flame,
And thrice she beat her breast for shame,
And thrice like a wounded dove she came
And moaned about the fire.

One watched, a bow-shot from the blaze,
The silent streets between,
Who had stood by the King in sport and fray,
To blade in ambush or boar at bay,
And he was a baron old and gray,
And kin to the Boondi Queen.

He said: "O shameless, put aside
The veil upon thy brow!
Who held the King and all his land
To the wanton will of a harlot's hand!
Will the white ash rise from the blistered brand?
Stoop down, and call him now!"

Then she: "By the faith of my tarnished soul,
All things I did not well
I had hoped to clear ere the fire died,
And lay me down by my master's side
To rule in Heaven his only bride,
While the others howl in Hell.

"But I have felt the fire's breath,
And hard it is to die!
Yet if I may pray a Rajpoot lord
To sully the steel of a Thakur's sword
With base-born blood of a trade abhorred"—
And the Thakur answered, "Aye."

He drew and struck: the straight blade drank
The life beneath the breast.
"I had looked for the Queen to face the flame,
But the harlot dies for the Rajpoot dame—
Sister of mine, pass, free from shame.
Pass with thy King to rest!"

The black log crashed above the white:
The little flames and lean,
Red as slaughter and blue as steel,
That whistled and fluttered from head to heel,
Leaped up anew, for they found their meal
On the heart of—the Boondi Queen!

THE BALLAD OF THE KING'S MERCY

Abdhur Rahman, the Durani Chief, of him is the story told.
His mercy fills the Khyber hills—his grace is manifold;
He has taken toll of the North and the South—his glory reacheth far,
And they tell the tale of his charity from Balkh to Kandahar.

BEFORE the old Peshawur Gate, where Kurd and Kaffir meet,
The Governor of Kabul dealt the Justice of the Street,
And that was strait as running noose and swift as plunging knife,
Tho' he who held the longer purse might hold the longer life.

There was a hound of Hindustan had struck
a Euzufzai,
Wherefore they spat upon his face and led
him out to die.
It chanced the King went forth that hour
when throat was bared to knife;
The Kaffir groveled under-hoof and clamored
for his life.

Then said the King: "Have hope, O friend!
Yea, Death disgraced is hard;
Much honor shall be thine;" and called the
Captain of the Guard.
Yar Khan, a bastard of the Blood, so city-
babble saith,
And he was honored of the King—the which
is salt to Death;
And he was son of Daoud Shah the Reiver of
the Plains,
And blood of old Durani Lords ran fire in his
veins;
And 'twas to tame an Afghan pride nor Hell
nor Heaven could bind,
The King would make him butcher to a yelp-
ing cur of hind.
"Strike!" said the King. "King's blood
art thou—his death shall be his pride!"
Then louder, that the crowd might catch:
"Fear not—his arms are tied!"
Yar Khan drew clear the Khyber knife, and
struck, and sheathed again.
"O man, thy will is done," quoth he; "A
King this dog hath slain."

Abdhur Rahman, the Durani Chief, to the North
and the South is sold,
The North and the South shall open their mouth
to a Ghilzai flag unrolled,
When the big guns speak to the Khyber peak, and
his dog-Heratis fly,
Ye have heard the song—How long? How long?
Wolves of the Abazai!

That night before the watch was set, when all
the streets were clear,
The Governor of Kabul spoke: "My King,
hast thou no fear?
"Thou knowest—thou hast heard,"—his
speech died at his master's face.
And grimly said the Afghan King: "I rule
the Afghan race.
"My path is mine—see thou to thine—to-
night upon thy bed
"Think who there be in Kabul now that
clamor for thy head."

That night when all the gates were shut to
City and to Throne,
Within a little garden-house the King lay down
alone.
Before the sinking of the moon, which is the
Night of Night,
Yar Khan came softly to the King to make
his honor white.
The children of the town had mocked beneath
his horse's hoofs,
The harlots of the town had hailed him
"butcher!" from their roofs.

But as he groped against the wall, two hands upon him fell,
The King behind his shoulder spoke: "Dead man, thou dost not well!
'Tis ill to jest with Kings by day and seek a boon by night;
And that thou bearest in thy hand is all too sharp to write.
But three days hence, if God be good, and if thy strength remain,
Thou shalt demand one boon of me and bless me in thy pain.
For I am merciful to all, and most of all to thee.
My butcher of the shambles, rest—no knife hast thou for me!"

Abdhur Rahman, the Durani Chief, holds
hard by the South and the North;
But the Ghilzai knows, ere the melting snows,
when the swollen banks break forth,
When the red-coats crawl to the sungar wall,
and his Usbeg lances fail.
Ye have heard the song—How long? How long?
Wolves of the Zuka Kheyl!

They stoned him in the rubbish-field when dawn was in the sky,
According to the written word, "See that he do not die."

They stoned him till the stones were piled above him on the plain,
And those the laboring limbs displaced they tumbled back again.

One watched beside the dreary mound that veiled the battered thing,
And him the King with laughter called the Herald of the King.

It was upon the second night, the night of Ramazan,
The watcher leaning earthward heard the message of Yar Khan.

From shattered breast through shriveled lips broke forth the rattling breath:
"Creature of God, deliver me from agony of Death."

They sought the King among his girls, and risked their lives thereby:
"Protector of the Pitiful, give orders that he die!"

"Bid him endure until the day," a lagging answer came;
"The night is short, and he can pray and learn to bless my name."

Before the dawn three times he spoke, and on the day once more:
"Creature of God deliver me and bless the King therefore!"

They shot him at the morning prayer, to ease him of his pain,
And when he heard the matchlocks clink, he blessed the King again.

Which thing the singers made a song for all
the world to sing,
So that the Outer Seas may know the mercy of
the King.

Abdhur Rahman, the Durani Chief, of him is the
story told.
He has opened his mouth to the North and the
South, they have stuffed his mouth with gold.
Ye know the truth of his tender ruth—and sweet
his favors are.
Ye have heard the song—How long? How long?
from Balkh to Kandahar.

THE BALLAD OF THE KING'S JEST

WHEN springtime flushes the desert grass,
Our kafilas wind through the Khyber Pass.
Lean are the camels but fat the frails,
Light are the purses but heavy the bales,
As the snowbound trade of the North comes
down
To the market-square of Peshawur town.

In a turquoise twilight, crisp and chill,
A kafila camped at the foot of the hill.
Then blue smoke-haze of the cooking rose,
And tentpeg answered to hammer-nose;
And the picketed ponies shag and wild,
Strained at their ropes as the feed was piled;
And the bubbling camels beside the load
Sprawled for a furlong adown the road;

And the Persian pussy-cats, brought for sale,
Spat at the dogs from the camel-bale;
And the tribesmen bellowed to hasten the food;
And the camp-fires twinkled by Fort Jumrood;
And there fled on the wings of the gathering dusk
A savor of camels and carpets and musk,
A murmur of voices, a reek of smoke.
To tell us the trade of the Khyber woke.
The lid of the flesh-pot chattered high,
The knives were whetted and—then came I
To Mahbub Ali, the muleteer,
Patching his bridles and counting his gear,
Crammed with the gossip of half a year.
But Mahbub Ali the kindly said,
"Better is speech when the belly is fed."
So we plunged the hand to the mid-wrist deep
In a cinnamon stew of the fat-tailed sheep,
And he who never hath tasted the food,
By Allah! he knoweth not bad from good.

We cleansed our beards of the mutton-grease,
We lay on the mats and were filled with peace,
And the talk slid north, and the talk slid south,
With the sliding puffs from the hookah-mouth.
Four things greater than all things are,—
Women and Horses and Power and War.
We spake of them all, but the last the most,
For I sought a word of a Russian post,
Of a shifty promise, an unsheathed sword
And a gray-coat guard on the Helmund ford.

Then Mahbub Ali lowered his eyes
In the fashion of one who is weaving lies.
Quoth he: "Of the Russians who can say?
When the night is gathering all is gray.
But we look that the gloom of the night shall die
In the morning flush of a blood-red sky.
Friend of my heart, is it meet or wise
To warn a King of his enemies?
We know what Heaven or Hell may bring,
But no man knoweth the mind of the King.
That unsought counsel is cursed of God
Attesteth the story of Wali Dad.

"His sire was leaky of tongue and pen,
His dam was a clucking Khuttuck hen;
And the colt bred close to the vice of each,
For he carried the curse of an unstaunched speech.
Therewith madness—so that he sought
The favor of kings at the Kabul court;
And traveled, in hope of honor, far
To the line where the gray-coat squadrons are.
There have I journeyed too—but I
Saw naught, said naught, and—did not die!
He hearked to rumor, and snatched at a breath
Of 'this one knoweth' and 'that one saith,'—
Legends that ran from mouth to mouth
Of a gray-coat coming, and sack of the South.
These have I also heard—they pass
With each new spring and the winter grass.

Hot-foot southward, forgotten of God,
Back to the city ran Wali Dad,
Even to Kabul—in full durbar
The King held talk with his Chief in War.
Into the press of the crowd he broke,
And what he had heard of the coming spoke.

"Then Gholam Hyder, the Red Chief, smiled
As a mother might on a babbling child;
But those who would laugh restrained their breath,
When the face of the King showed dark as death.
Evil it is in full durbar
To cry to a ruler of gathering War!
Slowly he led to a peach-tree small,
That grew by a cleft of the city wall.
And he said to the boy: 'They shall praise thy zeal
So long as the red spurt follows the steel.
And the Russ is upon us even now?
Great is thy prudence—await them, thou.
Watch from the tree. Thou art young and strong,
Surely thy vigil is not for long.
The Russ is upon us, thy clamor ran?
Surely an hour shall bring their van.
Wait and watch. When the host is near,
Shout aloud that my men may hear.'

"Friend of my heart, is it meet or wise
To warn a King of his enemies?

A guard was set that he might not flee—
A score of bayonets ringed the tree.
The peach-bloom fell in showers of snow,
When he shook at his death as he looked below.
By the power of God, who alone is great,
Till the seventh day he fought with his fate.
Then madness took him, and men declare
He mowed in the branches as ape and bear,
And last as a sloth, ere his body failed,
And he hung as a bat in the forks, and wailed,
And sleep the cord of his hands untied,
And he fell, and was caught on the points and died.

"Heart of my heart, is it meet or wise
To warn a King of his enemies?
We know what Heaven or Hell may bring,
But no man knoweth the mind of the King.
Of the gray-coat coming who can say?
When the night is gathering all is gray.
Two things greater than all things are,
The first is Love, and the second War.
And since we know not how War may prove,
Heart of my heart, let us talk of Love!"

THE BALLAD OF BOH DA THONE.

THIS is the ballad of Boh Da Thone,
Erst a Pretender to Theebaw's throne,
Who harried the district of Alalone :
How he met with his fate and the V. P. P.
At the hand of Harendra a Mukerji,
Senior Gomashta, G. B. T.

BOH DA THONE was a warrior bold,
His sword and his Snider were bossed with gold,

And the Peacock Banner his henchmen bore
Was stiff with bullion but stiffer with gore.

He shot at the strong and he slashed at the weak
From the Salween scrub to the Chindwin teak :

He crucified noble, he sacrificed mean,
He filled old women with kerosene :

While over the water the papers cried,
"The patriot fights for his countryside!"

But little they cared for the Native Press,
The worn white soldiers in Khaki dress,

Who tramped through the jungle and camped in the byre,
Who died in the swamp and were tombed in the mire,

Who gave up their lives, at the Queen's Command.
For the Pride of their Race and the Peace of the Land.

Now, first of the foemen of Boh Da Thone
Was Captain O'Neil of the "Black Tyrone,"

And his was a Company, seventy strong,
Who hustled that dissolute Chief along.

There were lads from Galway and Louth and Meath
Who went to their death with a joke in their teeth,

And worshiped with fluency, fervor, and zeal
The mud on the boot-heels of "Crook" O'Neil.

But ever a blight on their labors lay,
And ever their quarry would vanish away,

Till the sun-dried boys of the Black Tyrone
Took a brotherly interest in Boh Da Thone:

And, sooth, if pursuit in possession ends,
The Boh and his trackers were best of friends.

The word of a scout—a march by night—
A rush through the mist—a scattering fight—

A volley from cover—a corpse in the clearing—
The glimpse of a lion-cloth and heavy jade earring—

The flare of a village—the tally of slain—
And . . . the Boh was abroad "on the raid" again!

They cursed their luck as the Irish will,
They gave him credit for cunning and skill,

They buried their dead, they bolted their beef,
And started anew on the track of the thief

Till, in place of the "Kalends of Greece," men said,
"When Crook and his darlings come back with the head."

They had hunted the Boh from the Hills to the plain—
He doubled and broke for the hills again:

They had crippled his power for rapine and raid,
They had routed him out of his pet stockade,

And at last, they came, when the Day Star tired,
To a camp deserted—a village fired.

A black cross blistered the Morning-gold,
And the body upon it was stark and cold.

The wind of the dawn went merrily past,
The high grass bowed her plumes to the blast.

And out of the grass, on a sudden, broke
A spirtle of fire, a whorl of smoke—

And Captain O'Neil of the Black Tyrone
Was blessed with a slug in the ulna-bone—
The gift of his enemy Boh Da Thone.

(Now a slug that is hammered from telegraph-wire
Is a thorn in the flesh and a rankling fire.)

. . . . .

The shot-wound festered—as shot-wounds may
In a steaming barrack at Mandalay.

The left arm throbbed, and the captain swore,
"I'd like to be after the Boh once more!"

The fever held him—the Captain said,
"I'd give a hundred to look at his head!"

The Hospital punkahs creaked and whirred,
But Babu Harendra (Gomashta) heard.

He thought of the cane-brake, green and dank,
That girdled his home by the Dacca tank.

He thought of his wife and his High School son,
He thought—but abandoned the thought—of a gun.

His sleep was broken by visions dread
Of a shining Boh with a silver head.

He kept his counsel and went his way,
And swindled the cartmen of half their pay.

. . . . .

And the months went on, as the worst must do,
And the Boh returned to the raid anew.

But the Captain had quitted the long-drawn strife,
And in far Simoorie had taken a wife.

And she was a damsel of delicate mold,
With hair like the sunshine and heart of gold,

And little she knew the arms that embraced
Had cloven a man from the brow to the waist:

And little she knew that the loving lips
Had ordered a quivering life's eclipse,

And the eye that lit at her lightest breath
Had glared unawed in the Gates of Death.

(For these be matters a man would hide,
As a general rule, from an innocent Bride.)

And little the Captain thought of the past,
And, of all men, Babu Harendra last.

. . . . .

But slow, in the sludge of the Kathun road,
The Government Bullock Train toted its load.

Speckless and spotless and shining with *ghee*,
In the rearmost cart sat the Babu-jee.

And ever a phantom before him fled
Of a scowling Boh with a silver head.

Then the lead-cart stuck, though the coolies slaved,
And the cartmen flogged and the escort raved;

And out of the jungle, with yells and squeals,
Pranced Boh Da Thone, and his gang at his heels!

Then belching blunderbuss answered back
The Snider's snarl and the carbine's crack,

And the blithe revolver began to sing
To the blade that twanged on the locking-ring,

And the brown flesh blued where the bay'net kissed,
As the steel shot back with a wrench and a twist,

And the great white bullocks with onyx eyes
Watched the souls of the dead arise,

And over the smoke of the fusillade
The Peacock Banner staggered and swayed.

Oh, gayest of scrimmages man may see
Is a well-worked rush on the G. B. T.!

The Babu shook at the horrible sight,
And girded his ponderous loins for flight,

But Fate had ordained that the Boh should start
On a lone-hand raid of the rearmost cart,

And out of that cart, with a bellow of wo ,
That Babu fell—flat on the top of the Boh !

For years had Harendra served the State,
To the growth of his purse and the girth of his *pêt*—

There were twenty stone, as the tally-man knows,
On the broad of the chest of this best of Bohs.

And twenty stone from a height discharged
Are bad for a Boh with a spleen enlarged.

Oh, short was the struggle—severe was the shock—
He dropped like a bullock—he lay like a block ;

And the Babu above him, convulsed with fear,
Heard the laboring life-breath hissed out in his ear.

And thus in a fashion undignified
The princely pest of the Chindwin died.

. . . . .

Turn now to Simoorie where, lapped in his ease,
The Captain is petting the Bride on his knees.

Where the *whit* of the bullet, the wounded man's scream
Are mixed as the mist of some devilish dream—

Forgotten, forgotten the sweat of the shambles
Where the hill daisy blooms and the gray monkey gambols,

From the sword-belt set free and released from the steel,
The Peace of the Lord is with Captain O'Neil.

Up the hill to Simoorie—most patient of drudges—
The bags on his shoulder, the mail-runner trudges.

"For Captain O'Neil, *Sahib*. One hundred and ten
Rupees to collect on delivery."

Then
(Their breakfast was stopped while the screw-jack and hammer
Tore wax-cloth, split teak-wood, and chipped out the dammer;)

Open-eyed, open-mouthed, on the napery's snow,
With a crash and a thud, rolled—the Head of the Boh!

And gummed to the scalp was a letter which ran:

"In Fielding Force Service.
"*Encampment*,
"10th Jan.

"Dear Sir,—I have honor to send, *as you said*,
For final approval (see under) Boh's Head;

Was took by myself in most bloody affair.
By High Education brought pressure to bear.

"Now violate Liberty, time being bad,
"To mail V. P. P. (rupees hundred) Please add

"Whatever Your Honor can pass. Price of Blood
Much cheap at one hundred, and children want food.

"So trusting Your Honor will somewhat retain
True love and affection for Govt. Bullock Train,

"And show awful kindness to satisfy me,
"I am,
"Graceful Master,
"Your
"H. Mukerji."

. . . . .

As the rabbit is drawn to the rattlesnake's power,
As the smoker's eye fills at the opium hour,

As a horse reaches up to the manger above,
As the waiting ear yearns for the whisper of love,

From the arms of the Bride, iron-visaged and slow,
The Captain bent down to the Head of the Boh.

And e'en as he looked on the Thing where It lay
'Twixt the winking new spoons and the napkins' array,

The freed mind fled back to the long-ago days—
The hand-to-hand scuffle—the smoke and the blaze—

The forced march at night and the quick rush at dawn—
The banjo at twilight, the burial ere morn—

The stench of the marshes—the raw, piercing smell
When the overhand stabbing-cut silenced the yell—

The oaths of his Irish that surged when they stood
Where the black crosses hung o'er the Kuttamow flood.

As a derelict ship drifts away with the tide
The Captain went out on the Past from his Bride,

Back, back, through the springs to the chill of the year,
When he hunted the Boh from Maloon to Tsaleer.

As the shape of a corpse dimmers up through deep water,
In his eye lit the passionless passion of slaughter,

And men who had fought with O'Neil for the life
Had gazed on his face with less dread than his wife.

For she who had held him so long could not hold him—
Though a four-month Eternity should have controlled him—

But watched the twin Terror—the head turned to head—
The scowling, scarred Black, and the flushed savage Red—

The spirit that changed from her knowing and flew to
Some grim hidden Past she had never a clue to

But It knew as It grinned, for he touched it unfearing,
And muttered aloud, "So you kept that jade earring!"

Then nodded, and kindly, as friend nods to friend,
"Old man, you fought well, but you lost in the end."

. . . . .

The visions departed, and Shame followed Passion,
"He took what I said in this horrible fashion,

"*I'll* write to Harendra!" With language unsainted
The Captain came back to the Bride . . . who had fainted.

. . . . .

And this is a fiction? No. Go to Simoorie
And look at their baby, a twelve-month old Houri,

A pert litttle, Irish-eyed Kathleen Mavournin—
She's always about on the Mall of a mornin'—

And you'll see, if her right shoulder-strap is displaced,
This: *Gules* upon *argent*, a Boh's Head, *erased!*

THE LAMENT OF THE BORDER CATTLE THIEF

O wo is me for the merry life
I led beyond the Bar,
And a treble wo for my winsome wife
That weeps at Shalimar.

They have taken away my long jezail,
My shield and saber fine,
And heaved me into the Central jail
For lifting of the kine.

The steer may low within the byre,
The Jut may tend his grain,
But there'll be neither loot nor fire
Till I come back again.

And God have mercy on the Jut
When once my fetters fall,
And Heaven defend the farmer's hut
When I am loosed from thrall.

It's wo to bend the stubborn back
Above the grinching quern,
It's wo to hear the leg-bar clack
And jingle when I turn!

But for the sorrow and the shame,
The brand on me and mine,
I'll pay you back in leaping flame
And loss of the butchered kine.

NEBRASKA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE LIBRARY

For every cow I spared before
In charity set free,
If I may reach my hold once more
I'll reive an honest three!

For every time I raised the low
That scared the dusty plain,
By sword and cord, by torch and tow
I'll light the land with twain!

Ride hard, ride hard to Abazai,
Young *Sahib* with the yellow hair—
Lie close, lie close as khuttucks lie,
Fat herds below Bonair!

The one I'll shoot at twilight tide,
At dawn I'll drive the other;
The black shall mourn for hoof and hide,
The white man for his brother!

'Tis war, red war, I'll give you then,
War till my sinews fail,
For the wrong you have done to a chief of men
And a thief of the Zukka Kheyl.

And if I fall to your hand afresh
I give you leave for the sin,
That you cram my throat with the foul pig's flesh
And swing me in the skin!

THE RHYME OF THE THREE CAPTAINS

THIS ballad appears to refer to one of the exploits of the notorious Paul Jones, the American Pirate. It is founded on fact.

. . . AT the close of a winter day,
Their anchors down, by London town, the Three Great Captains lay.
And one was Admiral of the North from Solway Firth to Skye,
And one was Lord of the Wessex coast and all the lands thereby,
And one was Master of the Thames from Limehouse to Blackwall,
And he was Captain of the Fleet—the bravest of them all.
Their good guns guarded their great gray sides that were thirty foot in the sheer,
When there came a certain trading-brig with news of a privateer.
Her rigging was rough with the clotted drift that drives in a Northern breeze,
Her sides were clogged with the lazy weed that spawns in the Eastern seas.
Light she rode in the rude tide-rip, to left and right she rolled,
And the skipper sat on the scuttle-butt and stared at an empty hold.

"I ha' paid Port dues for your Law," quoth he, "and where is the Law ye boast
If I sail unscathed from a heathen port to be robbed on a Christian coast?
Ye have smoked the hives of the Laccadives as we burn the lice in a bunk;
We tack not now to a Gallang prow or a plunging Pei-ho junk;
I had no fear but the seas were clear as far as a sail might fare.
Till I met with a lime-washed Yankee brig that rode off Finisterre.
There were canvas blinds to his bow-gun ports to screen the weight he bore
And the signals ran for a merchantman from Sandy Hook to the Nore.
He would not fly the Rovers' flag—the bloody or the black,
But now he floated the Gridiron and now he flaunted the Jack.
He spoke of the Law as he crimped my crew—he swore it was only a loan;
But when I would ask for my own again, he swore it was none of my own.
He has taken my little parrakeets that nest beneath the Line,
He has stripped my rails of the shaddock-frails and the green unripened pine;
He has taken my bale of dammer and spice I won beyond the seas,
He has taken my grinning heathen gods—and what should he want o' these?

My foremast would not mend his boom, my deck-house patch his boats;
He has whittled the two this Yank Yahoo, to peddle for shoepeg-oats.
I could not fight for the failing light and a rough beam-sea beside,
But I hulled him once for a clumsy crimp and twice because he lied.
Had I had guns (as I had goods) to work my Christian harm,
I had run him up from his quarter-deck to trade with his own yard-arm;
I had nailed his ears to my capstan-head, and ripped them off with a saw,
And soused them in the bilgewater, and served them to him raw;
I had flung him blind in a rudderless boat to rot in the rocking dark;
I had towed him aft of his own craft, a bait for his brother shark;
I had lapped him round with cocoa husk, and drenched him with the oil,
And lashed him fast to his own mast to blaze above my spoil;
I had stripped his hide for my hammock-side, and tasseled his beard i' the mesh,
And spitted his crew on the live bamboo that grows through the gangrened flesh;
I had hove him down by the mangroves brown, where the mud-reef sucks and draws,
Moored by the heel to his own keel to wait for the land-crab's claws!

He is lazar within and lime without, ye can
t ose him far enow,
For e carries the taint of a musky ship—
t ne reek of the slaver's dhow!"
The kipper looked at the tiering guns and
t ne bulwarks tall and cold,
And the Captains Three full courteously
peered down at the gutted hole,
And the Captains Three called courteously
from deck to scuttle-butt:
"Good Sir, we ha' dealt with that merchant-
man or ever your teeth were cut.
Your words be words of a lawless race, and
the Law it standeth thus:
He comes of a race that have never a Law,
and he never has boarded us.
We ha' sold him canvas and rope and spar—
we know that his price is fair,
And we know that he weeps for the lack of
a Law as he rides off Finisterre.
And since he is damned for a gallows-thief
by you and better than you,
We hold it meet that the English fleet should
know that we hold him true."
The skipper called to the tall taffrail: "And
what is that to me?
Did ever you hear of a privateer that rifled
a Seventy-three?
Do I loom so large from your quarter-deck
that I lift like a ship o' the Line?
He has learned to run from a shotted gun
and harry such craft as mine.

There is never a Law on the Cocos Keys to
hold a white man in,
But we do not steal the niggers' meal, for
that is a nigger's sin.
Must he have his Law as a quid to chaw, or
laid in brass on his wheel?
Does he steal with tears when he buccaneers?
'Fore Gad, then, why does he steal?"
The skipper bit on a deep-sea word, and the
word it was not sweet,
For he could see the Captains Three had
signaled to the Fleet.
But three and two, in white and blue, the
whimpering flags began:
"We have heard a tale of a foreign sail, but
he is a merchantman."
The skipper peered beneath his palm and
swore by the Great Horn Spoon,
"'Fore Gad, the Chaplain of the Fleet would
bless my picaroon!"
By two and three the flags blew free to lash
the laughing air,
"We have sold our spars to the merchantman
—we know that his price is fair."
The skipper winked his Western eye, and
swore by a China storm:
"They ha' rigged him a Joseph's jury-coat to
keep his honor warm."
The halliards twanged against the tops, the
bunting bellied broad,
The skipper spat in the empty hold and
mourned for a wasted cord.

Masthead—masthead, the signal sped by the
line o' the British craft;
The skipper called to his Lascar crew, and
put her about and laughed:
It's mainsail haul, my bully boys all—we'll
out to the seas again;
Ere they set us to paint their pirate saint, or
scrub at his grapnel-chain
It's fore-sheet free, with her head to the sea,
and the swing of the unbought brine—
We'll make no sport in an English court till
we come as a ship o' the Line,
Till we come as a ship o' the Line, my lads,
of thirty foot in the sheer,
Lifting again from the outer main with news
of a privateer;
Flying his pluck at our mizzen-truck for
weft of Admiralty,
Heaving his head for our dipsy-lead in sign
that we keep the sea.
Then fore-sheet home as she lifts to the foam
—we stand on the outward tack
We are paid in the coin of the white man's
trade—the bezant is hard, ay, and black.
The frigate-bird shall carry my word to the
Kling and the Orang-Laut
How a man may sail from a heathen coast
to be robbed in a Christian port;
How a man may be robbed in Christian port
while Three Great Captains there
Shall dip their flag to a slaver's rag—to show
that his trade is fair!"

THE BALLAD OF THE "CLAMPHERDOWN"

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown"
Would sweep the Channel clean,
Wherefore she kept her hatches close
When the merry Channel chops arose,
To save the bleached marine.

She had one bow-gun of a hundred ton,
And a great stern-gun beside;
They dipped their noses deep in the sea,
They racked their stays and staunchions free
In the wash of the wind-whipped tide.

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown,"
Fell in with a cruiser light
That carried the dainty Hotchkiss gun
And a pair o' heels wherewith to run,
From the grip of a close-fought fight.

She opened fire at seven miles—
As ye shoot at a bobbing cork—
And once she fired and twice she fired,
Till the bow-gun drooped like a lily tired
That lolls upon the stalk.

"Captain, the bow-gun melts apace,
The deck-beams break below,
'Twere well to rest for an hour or twain,
And botch the shattered plates again."
And he answered, "Make it so."

She opened fire within the mile—
As ye shoot at the flying duck—
And the great stern-gun shot fair and true,
With the heave of the ship, to the stainless blue,
And the great stern-turret stuck.

"Captain, the turret fills with steam,
The feed-pipes burst below—
You can hear the hiss of helpless ram,
You can hear the twisted runners jam."
And he answered, "Turn and go!"

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown,"
And grimly did she roll;
Swung round to take the cruiser's fire
As the White Whale faces the Thresher's ire,
When they war by the frozen Pole.

"Captain, the shells are falling fast,
And faster still fall we;
And it is not meet for English stock,
To bide in the heart of an eight-day clock,
The death they cannot see."

"Lie down, lie down my bold A.B.,
We drift upon her beam;
We dare not ram for she can run;
And dare ye fire another gun,
And die in the peeling steam?"

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown"
That carried an armor-belt;
But fifty feet at stern and bow,
Lay bare as the paunch of the purser's sow,
To the hail of the Nordenfeldt.

"Captain, they lack us through and through,
The chilled steel bolts are swift!
We have emptied the bunkers in open sea,
Their shrapnel bursts where our coal should be."
And he answered, "Let her drift."

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown,"
Swung round upon the tide,
Her two dumb guns glared south and north,
And the blood and the bubbling steam ran forth,
And she ground the cruiser's side.

"Captain, they cry, the fight is done,
They bid you send your sword."
And he answered, "Grapple her stern and bow.
They have asked for the steel. They shall have it now;
Out cutlasses and board!"

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown,"
Spewed up four hundred men;
And the scalded stokers yelped delight,
As they rolled in the waist and heard the fight,
Stamp o'er their steel-walled pen.

They cleared the cruiser end to end,
From conning-tower to hold.
They fought as they fought in Nelson's fleet;
They were stripped to the waist, they were bare to the feet,
As it was in the days of old.

It was the sinking "Clampherdown"
Heaved up her battered side—
And carried a million pounds in steel,
To the cod and the corpse-fed conger-eel,
And the scour of the Channel tide.

It was the crew of the "Clampherdown"
Stood out to sweep the sea.
On a cruiser won from an ancient foe,
As it was in the days of long-ago,
And as it still shall be.

THE BALLAD OF THE "BOLIVAR"

Seven men from all the world, back to Docks again,
Rolling down the Ratcliffe Road drunk and raising Cain:
Give the girls another drink 'fore we sign away—
We that took the "Bolivar" out across the Bay!

We put out from Sunderland loaded down with rails;
We put back to Sunderland 'cause our cargo shifted;
We put out from Sunderland—met the winter gales—
Seven days and seven nights to the Start we drifted,

Racketing her rivets loose, smoke-stack white as snow,
All the coals adrift a deck, half the rails below

Leaking like a lobster-pot, steering like a dray—
Out we took the "Bolivar," out across the Bay!

One by one the Lights came up, winked and let us by;
Mile by mile we waddled on, coal and fo'c'sle short;
Met a blow that laid us down, heard a bulkhead fly;
Left The Wolf behind us with a two foot-list to port.

Trailing like a wounded duck, working out her soul;
Clanging like a smithy-shop after every roll;
Just a funnel and a mast lurching through the spray—
So we threshed the "Bolivar" out across the Bay!

Felt her hog and felt her sag, betted when she'd break;
Wondered every time she raced if she'd stand the shock;
Heard the seas like drunken men pounding at her strake;
Hoped the Lord 'ud keep his thumb on the plummer-block.

Banged against the iron decks, bilges choked with coal;

Flayed and frozen foot and hand, sick of
heart and soul;
'Last we prayed she'd buck herself into
Judgment Day—
Hi! we cursed the "Bolivar" knocking
round the Bay!

Oh! her nose flung up to sky, groaning to be
still—
Up and down and back we went, never time
for breath;
Then the money paid at Lloyd's caught her
by the heel,
And the stars ran round and round dancin'
at our death.

Aching for an hour's sleep, dozing off be-
tween;
Heard the rotten rivets draw when she
took it green;
Watched the compass chase its tail like
a cat at play—
That was on the "Bolivar," south across
the Bay.

Once we saw between the squalls, lyin' head
to swell—
Mad with work and weariness, wishin' they
was we—
Some damned Liner's lights go by like a grand
hotel;
Cheered her from the "Bolivar," swampin'
in the sea.

Then a grayback cleared us out, then the skipper laughed;
"Boys, the wheel has gone to Hell—rig the winches aft!
"Yoke the kicking rudder-head—get her under way!"
So we steered her, pulley-haul, out across the Bay!

Just a pack o' rotten plates puttied up with tar,
In we came, an' time enough 'cross Bilbao Bar.
Overloaded, undermanned, meant to founder, we
Euchred God Almighty's storm, bluffed the Eternal Sea!

Seven men from all the world, back to town again,
Rollin' down the Ratcliffe Road drunk and raising Cain:
Seven men from out of Hell. Ain't the owners gay,
'Cause we took the "Bolivar" safe across the Bay?

THE ENGLISH FLAG

Above the portico a flagstaff, bearing the Union Jack, remained fluttering in the flames for some time, but ultimately when it fell the crowds rent the air with shouts, and seemed to see significance in the incident. —DAILY PAPERS.

WINDS of the World, give answer? They are whimpering to and fro—
And what should they know of England who only England know?—

The poor little street-bred people that vapor and fume and brag,
They are lifting their heads in the stillness to yelp at the English Flag!

Must we borrow a clout from the Boer—to plaster anew with dirt?
An Irish liar's bandage, or an English coward's shirt?
We may not speak of England; her Flag's to sell or share.
What is the flag of England? Winds of the World, declare!

The North Wind blew: "From Bergen my steel-shod vanguards go;
I chase your lazy whalers home from the Disko floe;
By the great North Lights above me I work the will of God,
That the liner splits on the ice-field or the Dogger fills with cod.

"I barred my gates with iron, I shuttered my doors with flame,
Because to force my ramparts your nutshell navies came;
I took the sun from their presence, I cut them down with my blast,
And they died, but the Flag of England blew free ere the spirit passed.

"The lean white bear hath seen it in the long, long Arctic night,
The musk-ox knows the standard that flouts the Northern Light:
What is the Flag of England? Ye have but my bergs to dare,
Ye have but my drifts to conquer. Go forth, for it is there!"

The South Wind sighed: "From The Virgins my mid-sea course was ta'en
Over a thousand islands lost in an idle main,
Where the sea-egg flames on the coral and the long-backed breakers croon
Their endless ocean legends to the lazy, locked lagoon.

"Strayed amid lonely islets, mazed amid outer keys,
I waked the palms to laughter—I tossed the scud in the breeze—
Never was isle so little, never was sea so lone,
But over the scud and the palm-trees an English flag was flown.

"I have wrenched it free from the halliard to hang for a wisp on the Horn;
I have chased it north to the Lizard—rib-boned and rolled and torn;
I have spread its fold o'er the dying, adrift in a hopeless sea;
I have hurled it swift on the slaver, and seen the slave set free.

"My basking sunfish know it, and wheeling albatross,
Where the lone wave fills with fire beneath the Southern Cross.
What is the Flag of England? Ye have but my reefs to dare,
Ye have but my seas to furrow. Go forth, for it is there!"

The East Wind roared: "From the Kuriles, the Bitter Seas, I come,
And me men call the Home-Wind, for I bring the English home.
Look—look well to your shipping! By the breath of my mad typhoon
I swept your close-packed Praya and beached your best at Kowloon!

"The reeling junks behind me and the racing seas before,
I raped your richest roadstead—I plundered Singapore!
I set my hand on the Hoogli; as a hooded snake she rose,
And I flung your stoutest steamers to roost with the startled crows.

"Never the lotos closes, never the wild-fowl wake,
But a soul goes out on the East Wind that died for England's sake—
Man or woman or suckling, mother or bride or maid—
Because on the bones of the English the English Flag is stayed.

"The desert-dust hath dimmed it, the flying wild-ass knows
The scared white leopard winds it across the taintless snows.
What is the Flag of England? Ye have but my sun to dare,
Ye have but my sands to travel. Go forth, for it is there!"

The West Wind called: "In squadrons the thoughtless galleons fly
That bear the wheat and cattle lest street-bred people die.
They make my might their porter, they make my house their path,
Till I loose my neck from their rudder and whelm them all in my wrath.

"I draw the gliding fog-bank as a snake is drawn from the hole;
They bellow one to the other, the frighted ship-bells toll,
For day is a drifting terror till I raise the shroud with my breath,
And they see strange bows above them and the two go locked to death.

"But whether in calm or wrack-wreath, whether by dark or day,
I heave them whole to the conger or rip their plates away,
First of the scattered legions, under a shrieking sky,
Dipping between the rollers, the English Flag goes by.

"The dead dumb fog hath wrapped it—the frozen dews have kissed—
The naked stars have seen it, a fellow-star in the mist.
What is the Flag of England? Ye have but my breath to dare,
Ye have but my waves to conquer. Go forth, for it is there!"

"CLEARED"

(IN MEMORY OF A COMMISSION)

HELP for a patriot distressed, a spotless spirit hurt,
Help for an honorable clan sore trampled in the dirt!
From Queenstown Bay to Donegal, O listen to my song,
The honorable gentlemen have suffered grievous wrong.

Their noble names were mentioned—O the burning black disgrace!—
By a brutal Saxon paper in an Irish shooting-case;
They sat upon it for a year, then steeled their heart to brave it,
And "coruscating innocence" the learned Judges gave it.

Bear witness, Heaven, of that grim crime beneath the surgeon's knife,
The honorable gentleman deplored the loss of life ;
Bear witness of those chanting choirs that burk and shirk and snigger,
No man laid hand upon the knife or finger to the trigger !

Cleared in the face of all mankind beneath the winking skies,
Like phœnixes from Phœnix Park (and what lay there) they rise !
Go shout it to the emerald seas—give word to Erin now,
Her honorable gentlemen are cleared—and this is how :

They only paid the Moonlighter his cattle-hocking price,
They only helped the murderer with council's best advice,
But—sure it keeps their honor white—the learned Court believes
They never gave a piece of plate to murderers and thieves.

They never told the ramping crowd to card a woman's hide,
They never marked a man for death—what fault of theirs he died ?—

They only said "intimidate," and talked and went away—
By God, the boys that did the work were braver men than they!

Their sin it was that fed the fire—small blame to them that heard—
The "bhoys" get drunk on rhetoric, and maddened at the word—
They knew whom they were talking at, if they were Irish too,
The gentlemen that lied in Court, they knew and well they knew.

They only took the Judas-gold from Fenians out of jail,
They only fawned for dollars on the blood-dyed Clan-na-Gael.
If black is black or white is white, in black and white it's down,
They're only traitors to the Queen and rebels to the Crown.

"Cleared," honorable gentlemen. Be thankful it's no more:
The widow's curse is on your house, the dead are at your door.
On you the shame of open shame, on you from North to South
The hand of every honest man flat-heeled across your mouth.

" Less black than we were painted " ?—Faith,
no word of black was said ;
The lightest touch was human blood, and
that, ye know, runs red.
It's sticking to your fist to-day for all your
sneer and scoff,
And by the Judge's well-weighed word you
cannot wipe it off.

Hold up those hands of innocence—go, scare
your sheep together,
The blundering, tripping tups that bleat be-
hind the old bell-weather ;
And if they snuff the taint and break to find
another pen,
Tell them it's tar that glistens so, and daub
them yours again !

" The charge is old " ?—As old as Cain—as
fresh as yesterday ;
Old as the Ten Commandments, have ye
talked those laws away ?
If words are words, or death is death, or
powder sends the ball,
You spoke the words that sped the shot—the
curse be on you all.

" Our friends believe " ? Of course they do
—as sheltered women may ;
But have they seen the shrieking soul ripped
from the quivering clay ?

They!—If their own front door is shut, they'll swear the whole world's warm;
What do they know of dread of death or hanging fear of harm?

The secret half a country keeps, the whisper in the lane,
The shriek that tells the shot went home behind the broken pane,
The dry blood crisping in the sun that scares the honest bees,
And shows the "bhoys" have heard your talk —what do they know of these?

But you—you know—ay, ten times more; the secrets of the dead,
Black terror on the country-side by word and whisper bred,
The mangled stallion's scream at night, the tail-cropped heifer's low.
Who set the whisper going first? You know, and well you know!

My soul! I'd sooner lie in jail for murder plain and straight,
Pure crime I'd done with my own hand for money, lust, or hate,
Than take a seat in Parliament by fellow-felons cheered,
While one of those "not provens" proved me cleared as you are cleared.

Cleared—you that "lost" the League accounts—go, guard our honor still,
Go, help to make our country's laws that broke God's law at will—
One hand stuck out behind the back, to signal "strike again";
The other on your dress-shirt-front to show your heart is clane.

If black is black or white is white, in black and white it's down,
You're only traitors to the Queen and rebels to the Crown.
If print is print or words are words, the learned Court prepends:
We are not ruled by murderers, but only—by their friends.

AN IMPERIAL RESCRIPT

Now this is the tale of the Council the German Kaiser decreed,
To ease the strong of their burden, to help the weak in their need
He sent a word to the people, who struggle, and pant, and sweat,
That the straw might be counted fairly and the tally of bricks be set.

The Lords of Their Hands assembled; from the East and the West they drew—
Baltimore, Lille, and Essen, Brummagem, Clyde, and Crewe.

And some were black from the furnace, and some were brown from the soil,
And some were blue from the dye-vat; but all were wearied of toil.

And the young King said "I have found it, the road to the rest ye seek
The strong shall wait for the the weary, the hale shall halt for the weak;
With the even tramp of an army where no man breaks from the line,
Ye shall march to peace and plenty in the bond of brotherhood—sign!"

The paper lay on the table, the strong heads bowed thereby,
And a wail went up from the peoples: "Ay, sign—give rest, for we die!"
And hand was stretched to the goose-quill, a fist was cramped to scrawl,
When—the laugh of a blue-eyed maiden ran clear through the council-hall.

And each one heard Her laughing as each one saw Her plain—
Saidie, Mimi, or Olga, Gretchen, or Mary Jane.
And the Spirit of Man that is in Him to the light of the vision woke;
And the men drew back from the paper, as a Yankee delegate spoke:

"There's a girl in Jersey City who works on the telephone;

We're going to hitch our horses and dig for
a house of our own,
With gas and water connections, and steam-
heat through to the top;
And, W. Hohenzollern, I guess I shall work
till I drop."

And an English delegate thundered: "The
weak an' the lame be blowed!
I've a berth in the Sou'-West workshops, a
home in the Wandsworth Road;
And till the 'sociation has footed my buryin'
bill,
I work for the kids an' the missus. Pull
up! I'll be damned if I will!"

And over the German benches the bearded
whisper ran:
"Lager, der girls und der dollars, dey makes
or dey breaks a man.
If Schmitt haf collared der dollars, he collars
der girl deremit;
But if Schmitt bust in der pizness, we col-
lars der girl from Schmitt."

They passed one resolution: "Your sub-
committee believe
You can lighten the curse of Adam when
you've lightened the curse of Eve.
But till we are built like angels—with ham-
mer and chisel and pen,
We will work for ourself and a woman, forever
and ever. Amen."

Now this is the tale of the Council the German Kaiser held—
The day that they razored the Grindstone, the day that the Cat was belled,
The day of the Figs from Thistles, the day of the Twisted Sands,
The day that the laugh of a maiden made light of the Lords of Their Hands.

TOMLINSON

Now Tomlinson gave up the ghost in his house in Berkeley Square,
And a Spirit came to his bedside and gripped him by the hair—
A Spirit gripped him by the hair and carried him far away,
Till he heard as the roar of a rain-fed ford the roar of the Milky Way,
Till he heard the roar of the Milky Way die down and drone and cease,
And they came to the Gate within the Wall where Peter holds the keys.
"Stand up, stand up now, Tomlinson, and answer loud and high
The good that ye did for the sake of men or ever ye came to die—
The good that ye did for the sake of men in little earth so lone!"
And the naked soul of Tomlinson grew white as a rain-washed bone.

"O, I have a friend on earth," he said, "that
was my priest and guide,
And well would he answer all for me if he
were by my side."
—"For that ye strove in neighbor-love it shall
be written fair,
But now ye wait at Heaven's Gate and not in
Berkeley Square:
Though we called your friend from his bed
this night, he could not speak for you,
For the race is run by one and one and never
by two and two."
Then Tomlinson looked up and down, and
little gain was there,
For the naked stars grinned overhead, and he
saw that his soul was bare:
The Wind that blows between the worlds, it
cut him like a knife,
And Tomlinson took up his tale and spoke of
his good in life.
"This I have read in a book," he said, "and
that was told to me,
And this I have thought that another man
thought of a Prince in Muscovy."
The good souls flocked like homing doves and
bade him clear the path,
And Peter twirled the jangling keys in weari-
ness and wrath.
"Ye have read, ye have heard, ye have
thought," he said, "and the tale is yet
to run:
By the worth of the body that once ye had,
give answer—what ha' ye done"?

Then Tomlinson looked back and forth, and
little good it bore,
For the Darkness stayed at his shoulder-blade
and Heaven's Gate before:
"Oh, this I have felt, and this I have guessed,
and this I have heard men say,
And this they wrote that another man wrote
of a carl in Norroway."
"Ye have read, ye have felt, ye have guessed,
good lack! Ye have hampered Heaven's
Gate;
There's little room between the stars in idle-
ness to prate!
Oh, none may reach by hired speech of neigh-
bor, priest, and kin,
Through borrowed deed to God's good meed
that lies so far within;
Get hence, get hence to the Lord of Wrong,
for doom has yet to run,
And . . . the faith that ye share with Berk-
eley Square uphold you, Tomlinson!"

. . . . . .

The Spirit gripped him by the hair, and sun by
sun they fell
Till they came to the belt of Naughty Stars
that rim the mouth of Hell:
The first are red with pride and wrath, the
next are white with pain,
But the third are black with clinkered sin
that cannot burn again:
They may hold their path, they may leave
their path, with never a soul to mark,
They may burn or freeze, but they must not
cease in the Scorn of the Outer Dark.

The Wind that blows between the worlds, it
nipped him to the bone,
And he yearned to the flare of Hell-gate there
as the light of his own hearthstone.
The Devil he sat behind the bars, where the
desperate legions drew,
But he caught the hasting Tomlinson and would
not let him through.
"Wot ye the price of good pit-coal that I must
pay?" said he,
"That ye rank yoursel' so fit for Hell and ask
no leave of me?
I am all o'er-sib to Adam's breed that ye
should give me scorn,
For I strove with God for your First Father
the day that he was born.
Sit down, sit down upon the slag, and answer
loud and high
The harm that ye did to the Sons of Men or
ever you came to die."
And Tomlinson looked up and up, and saw
against the night
The belly of a tortured star blood-red in Hell-
Mouth light;
And Tomlinson looked down and down, and
saw beneath his feet
The frontlet of a tortured star milk-white in
Hell-Mouth heat.
"Oh, I had a love on earth," said he, "that
kissed me to my fall,
And if ye would call my love to me I know
she would answer all."
—"All that ye did in love forbid it shall be
written fair,

But now ye wait at Hell-Mouth Gate and not
in Berkeley Square:
Though we whistled your love from her bed
to-night, I trow she would not run,
For the sin ye do by two and two ye must
pay for one by one!"
The Wind that blows between the worlds, it
cut him like a knife,
And Tomlinson took up the tale and spoke of
his sin in life:
"Once I ha' laughed at the power of Love and
twice at the grip of the Grave,
And thrice I ha' patted my God on the head
that men might call me brave."
The Devil he blew on a brandered soul and
set it aside to cool:
"Do ye think I would waste my good pit-coal
on the hide of a brain-sick fool?
I see no worth in the hobnailed mirth or the
jolt-head jest ye did
That I should waken my gentlemen that are
sleeping three on a grid."
Then Tomlinson looked back and forth, and
there was little grace,
For Hell-Gate filled the houseless Soul with the
Fear of Naked Space.
"Nay, this I ha' heard," quo' Tomlinson, "and
this was noised abroad,
And this I ha' got from a Belgian book on the
word of a dead French lord."
—"Ye ha' heard, ye ha' read, ye ha' got, good
lack! And the tale begins afresh—
Have ye sinned one sin for the pride o' the
eye or the sinful lust of the flesh?"

Then Tomlinson he gripped the bars and yammered "Let me in—
For I mind that I borrowed my neighbor's wife to sin the deadly sin."
The Devil he grinned behind the bars, and banked the fires high:
"Did ye read of that sin in a book?" said he; and Tomlinson said "Ay!"
The Devil he blew upon his nails, and the little devils ran;
And he said, "Go husk this whimpering thief that comes in the guise of a man:
Winnow him out 'twixt star and star, and sieve his proper worth:
There's sore decline in Adam's line if this be spawn of earth."
Empusa's crew, so naked-new they may not face the fire,
But weep that they bin too small to sin to the height of their desire.
Over the coal they chased the Soul, and racked it all abroad,
As children rifle a caddis-case or the raven's foolish hoard.
And back they came with the tattered Thing, as children after play,
And they said: "The soul that he got from God he has bartered clean away.
We have threshed a stook of print and book, and winnowed a chattering wind
And many a soul wherefrom he stole, but his we cannot find:
We have handled him, we have dandled him, we have seared him to the bone,

And sure if tooth and nail show truth he has
no soul of his own."
The Devil he bowed his head on his breast and
rumbled deep and low:
"I'm all o'er-sib to Adam's breed that I should
bid him go.
Yet close we lie, and deep we lie, and if I
gave him place,
My gentlemen that are so proud would flout
me to my face;
They'd call my house a common stews and
me a careless host,
And—I would not anger my gentlemen for the
sake of a shiftless ghost."
The Devil he looked at the mangled Soul that
prayed to feel the flame,
And he thought of Holy Charity, but he
thought of his own good name:
"Now ye could haste my coal to waste, and
sit ye down to fry:
Did ye think of that theft for yourself?" said
he; and Tomlinson said "Ay!"
The Devil he blew an outward breath, for his
heart was free from care:
"Ye have scarce the soul of a louse," he said,
"but the roots of sin are there,
And for that sin should ye come in were I the
lord alone.
But sinful pride has rule inside—and mightier
than my own.
Honor and Wit, fore-damned they sit, to each
his priest and whore:
Nay, scarce I dare myself go there, and you
they'd torture sore.

Ye are neither spirit nor spirk," he said; "ye
are neither book nor brute—
Go, get ye back to the flesh again for the sake
of Man's repute.
I'm all o'er-sib to Adam's breed that I should
mock your pain,
But look that ye win to worthier sin ere ye
come back again.
Get hence, the hearse is at your door—the
grim black stallions wait—
They bear your clay to place to-day. Speed,
lest ye come too late!
Go back to Earth with a lip unsealed—go back
with an open eye,
And carry my word to the Sons of Men or
ever ye come to die:
That the sin they do by two and two they
must pay for one by one—
And . . . the God that you took from a
printed book be with you, Tomlinson!"

BARRACK-ROOM BALLADS

DANNY DEEVER

"WHAT are the bugles blowin' for?" said Files-on-Parade.
"To turn you out, to turn you out," the Color-Sergeant said.
"What makes you look so white, so white?" said Files-on-Parade.
"I'm dreadin' what I've got to watch," the Color-Sergeant said.

For they're hangin' Danny Deever, you can 'ear the Dead March play,
The regiment's in 'ollow square—they're hangin' him to-day;
They've taken of his buttons off an' cut his stripes away,
An' they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"What makes the rear-rank breathe so 'ard?" said Files-on-Parade.
"It's bitter cold, it's bitter cold," the Color-Sergeant said.

"What makes that front-rank man fall down?" says Files-on-Parade.
"A touch of sun, a touch of sun," the Color-Sergeant said.
They are hangin' Danny Deever, they are marchin' of 'im round,
They 'ave 'alted Danny Deever by 'is coffin on the ground;
An' 'e'll swing in 'arf a minute for a sneakin', shootin' hound—
O they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'!

"'Is cot was right-'and cot to mine," said Files-on-Parade.
"'E's sleepin' out an' far to-night," the Color-Sergeant said.
"I've drunk 'is beer a score o' times," said Files-on-Parade.
"'E's drinkin' bitter beer alone," the Color-Sergeant said.
They are hangin' Danny Deever, you must mark 'im to 'is place,
For 'e shot a comrade sleepin'—you must look 'im in the face;
Nine 'undred of 'is county an' the regiment's disgrace,
While they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"What's that so black agin the sun?" said Files-on-Parade.
"It's Danny fightin' 'ard for life," the Color-Sergeant said.

"What's that that whimpers over'ead?" said Files-on-parade.
"It's Danny's soul that's passin' now," the Color-Sergeant said.
For they're done with Danny Deever, you can 'ear the quickstep play,
The regiment's in column, an' they're marchin' us away;
Ho! the young recruits are shakin', an' they'll want their beer to-day,
After hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"TOMMY"

I WENT into a public-'ouse to get a pint o' beer,
The publican 'e up an' sez, "We serve no red-coats here."
The girls be'ind the bar they laughed an' giggled fit to die,
I outs into the street again, an' to myself sez I:
O it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy go away;"
But it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins," when the band begins to play,
The band begins to play, my boys, the band begins to play,
O it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins," when the band begins to play.

I went into a theater as sober as could be,
They give a drunk civilian room, but 'adn't none for me;
They sent me to the gallery or round the music-'alls,
But when it comes to fightin', Lord! they'll shove me in the stalls.
For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy wait outside;"
But it's "Special train for Atkins," when the trooper's on the tide,
The Troopship's on the tide, my boys, etc.

O makin' mock o' uniforms that guard you while you sleep
Is cheaper than them uniforms, an' they're starvation cheap;
An' hustlin' drunken sodgers when they're goin' large a bit
Is five times better business than paradin' in full kit.
Then it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy, 'ow's yer soul?"
But it's "Thin red line of 'eroes" when the drums begin to roll,
The drums begin to roll, my boys, etc.

We aren't no thin red 'eroes, nor we aren't no blackguards too,
But single men in barricks, most remarkable like you;

An' if sometimes our conduck isn't all your fancy paints,
Why, single men in barricks don't grow into plaster saints.
While it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy fall be'ind;"
But it's "Please to walk in front, sir," when there's trouble in the wind,
There's trouble in the wind, my boys, etc.

You talk o' better food for us, an' schools, an' fires, an' all:
We'll wait for extry rations if you treat us rational.
Don't mess about the cook-room slops, but prove it to our face
The Widow's uniform is not the soldier-man's disgrace.
For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Chuck him out, the brute!"
But it's "Saviour of 'is country" when the guns begin to shoot;
An' it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' anything you please;
An' Tommy ain't a bloomin' fool—you bet that Tommy sees!

"FUZZY-WUZZY"

(*Soudan Expeditionary Force.*)

We've fought with many men acrost the seas,
An' some of 'em was brave an' some was not:
The Paythan an' the Zulu an' Burmese;
But the Fuzzy was the finest o' the lot.
We never got a ha'porth's change of 'im:
'E squatted in the scrub an' 'ocked our 'orses,
'E cut our sentries up at Sua*kim*,
An' 'e played the cat an' banjo with our forces.
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome in the Sowdan;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen but a first-class fightin' man;
We gives you your certifikit, an' if you want it signed
We'll come an' 'ave a romp with you whenever you're inclined.

We took our chanst among the Kyber 'ills,
The Boers knocked us silly at a mile,
The Burman guv us Irriwaddy chills,
An' a Zulu *impi* dished us up in style:
But all we ever got from such as they
Was pop to what the Fuzzy made us swaller;

We 'eld our bloomin' own, the papers say,
But man for man the Fuzzy knocked us 'oller.
Then 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' the missis and the kid;
Our orders was to break you, an' of course we went an' did.
We sloshed you with Martinis, an' it wasn't 'ardly fair;
But for all the odds agin you, Fuzzy-Wuz, you bruk the square.

'E 'asn't got no papers of 'is own,
'E 'asn't got no medals nor rewards,
So we must certify the skill 'e's shown
In usin' of 'is long two-'anded swords:
When 'e's 'oppin' in an' out among the bush
With 'is coffin-'eaded shield an' shovel-spear,
A 'appy day with Fuzzy on the rush
Will last a 'ealthy Tommy for a year.
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' your friends which is no more,
If we 'adn't lost some messmates we would 'elp you to deplore;
But give an' take's the gospel, an' we'll call the bargain fair,
For if you 'ave lost more than us, you crumpled up the square!

'E rushes at the smoke when we let drive,
An', before we know, 'e's 'ackin' at our 'ead;
E's all 'ot sand an' ginger when alive,
An' 'e's generally shammin' when 'e's dead.

'E's a daisy, 'e's a ducky, 'e's a lamb!
'E's a injia-rubber idiot on the spree,
'E's the on'y thing that doesn't care a damn
For the Regiment o' British Infantree.
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome in the Sowdan;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen but a first-class fightin' man;
An' 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, with your 'ayrick 'ead of 'air—
You big black boundin' beggar—for you bruk a British square.

OONTS!

(*Northern India Transport Train.*)

Wot makes the soldier's 'eart to penk, wot makes 'im to perspire?
It isn't standin' up to charge or lyin' down to fire;
But it's everlastin' waitin' on a everlastin' road
For the commissariat camel an' 'is commissariat load.
O the *oont*,[1] O the *oont*, O the commissariat *oont!*
With 'is silly neck a-bobbin' like a basket full o' snakes;

[1] Camel: *oo* is pronounced like *u* in "bull," but by Mr. Atkins to rhyme with "front."

We packs 'im like a idol, an' you ought
to 'ear 'im grunt,
An' when we gets 'im loaded up 'is
blessed girth-rope breaks.

Wot makes the rear-guard swear so 'ard when
night is drorin' in,
An' every native follower is shiverin' for 'is
skin?
It ain't the chanst o' bein' rushed by Paythans
frum the 'ills,
It's the commissariat camel puttin' on 'is
blessed frills!
O the *oont*, O the *oont*, O the hairy
scary *oont!*
A-trippin' over tent-ropes when we've
got the night alarm;
We socks 'im with a stretcher-pole an'
'eads 'im off in front,
An' when we've saved 'is bloomin' life
'e chaws our bloomin' arm.

The 'orse 'e knows above a bit, the bullock's
but a fool.
The elephant's a gentleman, the baggage-
mule's a mule;
But the commissariat cam-u-el, when all is
said an' done,
'E's a devil an' a ostrich an' a orphan-child in
one.
O the *oont*, O the *oont*, O the Gawd-
forsaken *oont!*

The 'umpy-lumpy, 'ummin'-bird a-sing-
where 'e lies,
'E's blocked the 'ole division from
the rear-guard to the front,
An' when we gets 'im up again—the
beggar goes an' dies!

'E'll gall an' chafe an' lame an' fight; 'e smells
most awful vile;
'E'll lose 'imself forever if you let 'im stray a
mile;
'E's game to graze the 'ole day long an' 'owl
the 'ole night through,
An' when 'e comes to greasy ground 'e splits
'isself in two.
O the *oont*, O the *oont*, O the flop-
pin', droppin' *oont!*
When 'is long legs give from under an'
'is meltin' eye is dim,
The tribes is up be'ind us an' the tribes
is out in front,
It ain't no jam for Tommy, but it's
kites and crows for 'im.

So when the cruel march is done an' when
the roads is blind,
An' when we sees the camp in front an' 'ears
the shots be'ind,
O then we strips 'is saddle off, an' all 'is woes
is past:
'E thinks on us that used 'im so, an' gets re-
venge at last.

O the *oont*, O the *oont*, O the floatin',
bloatin' *oont!*
The late lamented camel in the water-
cut he lies;
We keeps a mile behind 'im an' we keeps
a mile in front,
But 'e gets into the drinkin' casks, and
then o' course we dies.

LOOT

If you've ever stole a pheasant-egg be'ind
the keeper's back,
If you've ever snigged the washin' from the
line,
If you've ever crammed a gander in your
bloomin' 'aversack.
You will understand this little song o'
mine.
But the service rules are 'ard, an' frum such
we are debarred,
For the same with British morals does not
suit (*Cornet:* Toot! toot!)—
W'y, they call a man a robber if 'e stuffs 'is
marchin' clobber
With the—
(*Chorus.*) Loo! loo! Lulu! lulu! Loo!
loo! Loot! loot! loot!
'Ow the loot'
Bloomin' loot!

That's the thing to make the boys git
up an' shoot!
It's the same with dogs an' men,
If you'd make 'em come again
Clap 'em forward with a Loo! loo!
Lulu! Loot!
(*ff*) Whoopee! Tear 'im, puppy! Loo! loo!
Lulu! Loot! loot! loot!

If you've knocked a nigger edgeways when
'e's thrustin' for your life,
You must leave 'im very careful where 'e
fell;
An' may thank your stars an' gaiters if you
didn't feel 'is knife
That you ain't told off to bury him as well.
Then the sweatin' Tommies wonder as they
spade the beggars under
Why lootin' should be entered as a crime;
So if my song you'll 'ear, I will learn you plain
an' clear
'Ow to pay yourself for fightin' overtime
(*Chorus.*) With the loot, etc.

Now remember when you're 'acking round a
gilded Burma god
That 'is eyes is very often precious stones;
An' if you treat a nigger to a dose o' cleanin'-
rod
'E's like to show you everything 'e owns.
When 'e won't prodooce no more, pour some
water on the floor
Where you 'ear it answer 'ollow to the boot
(*Cornet:* Toot! toot!)—

When the ground begins to sink, shove your baynick down the chink,
An' you're sure to touch the—
(*Chorus.*) Loo! loo! Lulu! Loot! loot! loot!
'Ow the loot, etc.

When from 'ouse to 'ouse you're 'untin' you must always work in pairs—
It 'alves the gain, but safer you will find—
For a single man gits bottled on them twisty-wisty stairs,
An' a woman comes and clobs 'im from be'ind.
When you've turned 'em inside out, an' it seems beyond a doubt
As if there weren't enough to dust a flute
(*Cornet:* Toot! toot!)—
Before you sling your 'ook, at the 'ouse-tops take a look,
For it's underneath the tiles they 'ide the loot.
(*Chorus.*) 'Ow the loot, etc.

You can mostly square a Sergint an' a Quarter-master too,
If you only take the proper way to go;
I could never keep my pickin's but I've learned you all I know—
An' don't you never say I told you so.
An' now I'll bid good-by, for I'm gettin' rather dry,
An' I see another tunin' up to toot (*Cornet:* Toot! toot!)—

So 'ere's good-luck to those that wears the Widow's clo'es,
An' the Devil send 'em all they want o' loot!
(*Chorus.*) Yes, the loot,
Bloomin' loot.
In the tunic an' the mess-tin an' the boot!
It's the same with dogs an' men,
If you'd make 'em come again
Whoop 'em forward with the Loo! loo!
Lulu! Loot! loot! loot!
Heeya! Sick 'im, puppy! Loo! loo!
Lulu! Loot! loot! loot!

"SNARLEYOW"

This 'appened in a battle to a batt'ry of the corps
Which is first among the women an' amazin' first in war;
An' what the bloomin' battle was I don't remember now,
But Two's off-lead 'e answered to the name o' *Snarleyow.*

Down in the Infantry, nobody cares;
Down in the Cavalry, Colonel 'e swears;
But down in the lead, with the wheel at the flog,
Turns the bold Bombardier to a little whipped dog!

They was movin' into action, they was needed very sore,
To learn a little schoolin' to a native army corps.
They 'ad nipped against an uphill, they was tuckin' down the brow,
When a tricky, trundlin' round-shot gave the knock to Snarleyow.

They cut 'im loose an' left 'im—'e was almost tore in two,—
But 'e tried to follow after, as a well-trained 'orse should do.
'E went an' fouled the limber, an' the Driver's Brother squeals:
" Pull up, pull up for Snarleyow—'is 'ead's between 'is 'eels ! "

The Driver 'umped 'is shoulder, for the wheels was goin' round,
An' there aren't no " Stop, conductor ! " when a batt'ry's changin' ground.
Sez 'e: " I broke the beggar in, an' very sad I feels,
But I couldn't pull up, not for *you*—your 'ead between your 'eels ! "

'E 'adn't 'ardly spoke the word, before a droppin' shell
A little right the batt'ry and between the sections fell;
An' when the smoke 'ad cleared away, before the limber wheels,
There lay the Driver's Brother with 'is 'ead between 'is 'eels.

Then sez the Driver's Brother, an' 'is words was very plain,
" For Gawd's own sake, get over me, an' put me out o' pain! "
They saw 'is wounds was mortal, an' they judged that it was best,
So they took an' drove the limber straight across 'is back an' chest.

The Driver 'e gave nothin' 'cept a little coughin' grunt—
But 'e swung 'is 'orses 'andsome when it came to " Action front! "
An' if one wheel was juicy, you may lay your Monday 'ead,
'Twas juicier for the niggers when the case begun to spread.

The moril of this story—it is plainly to be seen:
You 'aven't got no families when servin' of the Queen—
You 'aven't got no brothers, fathers, sisters, wives, or sons;
If you want to win your battles, take an' work your bloomin' guns!

Down in the Infantry, nobody cares;
Down in the Cavalry, Colonel 'e swears;
But down in the lead, with the wheel at the flog,
Turns the bold Bombardier to a little whipped dog!

SOLDIER, SOLDIER.

"Soldier, soldier come from the wars,
Why don't you march with my true love?"
"We're fresh from off the ship, an' 'e's maybe give the slip,
An' you'd best go look for a new love."
New love! True love!
Best go look for a new love,
The dead they cannot rise, an' you'd better dry your eyes,
An' you'd best go look for a new love.

"Soldier, soldier come from the wars,
What did you see o' my true love?"
"I see 'im serve the Queen in a suit o' rifle green,
An' you'd best go look for a new love."

"Soldier, soldier come from the wars,
Did ye see no more o' my true love?"
"I see 'im runnin' by when the shots begun to fly—
But you'd best go look for a new love."

"Soldier, soldier come from the wars,
Did aught take 'arm to my true love?"
"I couldn't see the fight, for the smoke it lay so white—
An' you'd best go look for a new love."

"Soldier, soldier come from the wars,
I'll up an' tend to my true love!"
"'E's lying on the dead with a bullet through
'is 'ead,
An' you'd best go look for a new love."

"Soldier, soldier come from the wars,
I'll lie down an' die with my true love!"
"The pit we dug'll 'ide 'im an' twenty men
beside 'im—
An' you'd best go look for a new love."

"Soldier, soldier come from the wars,
Do you bring no sign from my true love?"
"I bring a lock of 'air that 'e allus used to wear,
An' you'd best go look for a new love."

"Soldier, soldier come from the wars,
O then I know it's true I've lost my true
love!"
"An' I tell you truth again—when you've lost
the feel o' pain
You'd best take me for your true love."

True love! New love!
Best take 'im for a new love.
The dead they cannot rise, an' you'd
better dry your eyes,
An' you'd best take 'im for your true love.

THE SONS OF THE WIDOW

'Ave you 'eard o' the Widow at Windsor
With a hairy gold crown on 'er 'ead?
She 'as ships on the foam—she 'as millions at 'ome,
An' she pays us poor beggars in red.
(Ow, poor beggars in red!)
There's 'er nick on the cavalry 'orses
There's 'er mark on the medical stores—
An' 'er troopers you'll find with a fair wind be'ind
That takes us to various wars.
(Poor beggars!—barbarious wars!)
Then 'ere's to the Widow at Windsor,
An' 'ere's to the stores an' the guns,
The men an' the 'orses what makes up the forces
O' Missis Victorier's sons.
(Poor beggars!—Victorier's sons!)

Walk wide o' the Widow at Windsor,
For 'alf o' creation she owns:
We 'ave bought 'er the same with the sword an' the flame,
An' we've salted it down with our bones.
(Poor beggars!—it's blue with our bones.)
Hands off o' the sons of the Widow,
Hands off o' the goods in 'er shop,

For the Kings must come down an' the Emperor frown
When the Widow at Windsor says "Stop!"
(Poor beggars!—we're sent to say "Stop!")
Then 'ere's to the Lodge o' the Widow,
From the Pole to the Tropics it runs—
To the Lodge that we tile with the rank an' the file,
An' open in forms with the guns.
(Poor beggars!—it's always them guns!)

We 'ave 'eard o' the Widow at Windsor
It's safest to let 'er alone:
For 'er sentries we stand by the sea an' the land
Wherever the bugles are blown.
(Poor beggars!—an' don't we get blown!)
Take 'old o' the wings o' the mornin',
An' flop round the earth till you're dead;
But you won't get away from the tune that they play
To the bloomin' old rag over'ead.
(Poor beggars!—it's 'ot over'ead!)
Then 'ere's to the sons o' the Widow,
Wherever, 'owever they roam.
'Ere's all they desire, an' if they require
A speedy return to their 'ome.
(Poor beggars!—they'll never see 'ome!)

TROOPIN'

(Our Army in the East.)

TROOPIN', troopin', troopin' to the sea:
'Ere's September come again—the six-year men are free.
O leave the dead be'ind us, for they cannot come away
To where the ship's a-coalin' up that take us 'ome to day.

We're goin' 'ome we're goin' 'ome,
Our ship is *at* the shore,
An' you must pack your 'aversack,
For we won't come back no more.
Ho, don't you grieve for me,
My lovely Mary-Anne,
For I'll marry you yit on a fourp'ny bit
As a time-expired man.

The *Malabar's* in 'arbor with the *Jummer* at 'er tail,
An' the time-expired's waitin' of 'is orders for to sail.
O the weary waitin' when on Khyber 'ills we lay
But the time-expired's waitin' of 'is orders 'ome to-day.

They'll turn us out at Portsmouth wharf in
cold an' wet an' rain,
All wearin' Injian cotton kit, but we will not
complain;
They'll kill us of pneumonia—for that's their
little way—
But damn the chills and fever, men, we're
goin' 'ome to-day!

Troopin', troopin'—winter's round again!
See the new draf's pourin' in for the old
campaign;
Ho, you poor recruities, but you've got to
earn your pay—
What's the last from Lunnon, lads? We're
goin' there to-day.

Troopin', troopin', give another cheer—
'Ere's to English women an' a quart of Eng-
lish beer;
The Colonel an' the regiment an' all who've
got to stay,
Gawd's mercy strike 'em gentle—Whoop! we're goin' 'ome to-day.

We're goin' 'ome, we're goin' 'ome,
Our ship is *at* the shore,
An' you must pack your 'aversack,
For we won't come back no more.
Ho, don't you grieve for me,
My lovely Mary-Anne,
For I'll marry you yit on a fourp'ny bit
As a time-expired man.

GUNGA DIN

THE *bhisti*, or water-carrier, attached to regiments in India, is often one of the most devoted of the Queen's servants. He is also appreciated by the men.

[THIS BALLAD IS EXTENSIVELY PLAGIARIZED.]

You may talk o' gin an' beer
When you're quartered safe out 'ere,
An' you're sent to penny-fights an' Aldershot it;
But if it comes to slaughter
You will do your work on water,
An' you'll lick the bloomin' boats of 'im that's got it.
Now in Injia's sunny clime,
Where I used to spend my time
A-servin' of 'Er Majesty the Queen,
Of all them black-faced crew
The finest man I knew
Was our regimental *bhisti*, Gunga Din.
He was "Din! Din! Din!
You limping lump o' brick-dust, Gunga Din!
Hi! *slippy hitherao!*
Water, get it! *Hanee lao!*[1]
You squidgy-nosed old idol, Gunga Din!"

The uniform 'e wore
Was nothin' much before,

[1] Bring water swiftly.

An' rather less than 'arf o' that be'ind,
For a twisty piece o' rag
An' a goatskin water bag
Was all the field-equipment 'e could find.
When the sweatin' troop-train lay
In a sidin' through the day,
Where the 'eat would make your bloomin' eyebrows crawl,
We shouted "Harry By!"[1]
Till our throats were bricky-dry,
Then we wopped 'im 'cause 'e couldn't serve us all.

It was "Din! Din! Din!
You 'eathen, where the mischief 'ave you been?
You put some *juldee* in it,
Or I'll *marrow* you this minute[2]
If you don't fill up my helmet, Gunga Din!"

'E would dot an' carry one
Till the longest day was done,
An' 'e didn't seem to know the use o' fear.
If we charged or broke or cut,
You could bet your bloomin' nut,
'E'd be waitin' fifty paces right flank rear.
With 'is *mussick* on 'is back,
'E would skip with our attack,
An' watch us till the bugles made "Retire."
An' for all 'is dirty 'ide

[1] Mr. Atkins's equivalent for "O Brother!"
[2] Hit you.

'E was white, clear white, inside
When 'e went to tend the wounded under fire!
It was "Din! Din! Din!"
With the bullets kickin' dust-spots on the green.
When the cartridges ran out,
You could 'ear the front-files shout:
"Hi! ammunition-mules an' Gunga Din!"

I sha'n't forgit the night
When I dropped be'ind the fight
With a bullet where my belt-plate should 'a' been.
I was chokin' mad with thirst,
An' the man that spied me first
Was our good old grinnin', gruntin' Gunga Din.
'E lifted up my 'ead,
An' 'e plugged me where I bled,
An' 'e guv me 'arf-a-pint o' water—green:
It was crawlin' and it stunk,
But of all the drinks I've drunk,
I'm gratefullest to one from Gunga Din.
It was "Din! Din! Din!
'Ere's a beggar with a bullet through 'is spleen;
'E's chawin' up the ground an' 'e's kickin' all around:
For Gawd's sake git the water, Gunga Din!"

'E carried me away
To where a *dooli* lay,

An' a bullet come an' drilled the beggar clean.
'E put me safe inside,
An, just before 'e died:
"I 'ope you liked your drink," sez Gunga Din.
So I'll meet 'im later on
In the place where 'e is gone—
Where it's always double drill and no canteen;
'E'll be squattin' on the coals
Givin' drink to pore damned souls,
An' I'll get a swig in Hell from Gunga Din!
Din! Din! Din!
You Lazarushian-leather Gunga Din!
Tho' I've belted you an' flayed you,
By the livin' Gawd that made you,
You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din!

MANDALAY

By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to the sea,
There's a Burma girl a-settin', an' I know she thinks o' me;
For the wind is in the palm-trees, an' the temple-bells they say:
Come you back, you British soldier: come you back to Mandalay!"
Come you back to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay:
Can't you 'ear their paddles chunkin' from
Rangoon to Mandalay?

O the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer
China 'crost the Bay!

'Er petticut was yaller an' 'er little cap was green,
An' 'er name was Supi-yaw-lat—jes' the same as Theebaw's Queen,
An' I seed her fust a-smokin' of a whackin' white cheroot,
An' a-wastin' Christian kisses on an 'eathen idol's foot:
Bloomin' idol made o' mud—
Wot they called the Great Gawd Budd—
Plucky lot she cared for idols when I kissed 'er where she stud!
On the road to Mandalay—

When the mist was on the rice-fields an' the sun was droppin' slow,
She'd git 'er little banjo an' she'd sing "*Kulla-lo-lo!*"
With 'er arm upon my shoulder an' her cheek agin my cheek
We useter watch the steamers and the *hathis* pilin' teak.
Elephints a-pilin' teak
In the sludgy squdgy creek,
Where the silence 'ung that 'eavy you was 'arf afraid to speak!
On the road to Mandalay—

But that's all shove be'ind me—long ago an' fur away,
An' there ain't no 'buses runnin' from the Benk to Mandalay;
An' I'm learnin' 'ere in London what the ten-year sodger tells:
"If you've 'eard the East a-calling," why, you won't 'eed nothin' else."
No! you won't 'eed nothin' else
But them spicy garlic smells
An' the sunshine an' the palm-trees an' the tinkly temple-bells!
On the road to Mandalay—

I am sick o' wastin' leather on these gutty pavin'-stones,
An' the blasted Henglish drizzle wakes the fever in my bones;
Tho' I walks with fifty 'ousemaids outer Chelsea to the Strand,
An' they talks a lot o' lovin', but wot do they understand?
Beefy face an' grubby 'and—
Law! wot *do* they understand?
I've a neater, sweeter maiden in a cleaner greener land!
On the road to Mandalay—

Ship me somewheres east of Suez where the best is like the worst,
Where there aren't no Ten Commandments, an' a man can raise a thirst;

For the temple-bells are callin', an' it's there that I would be—
By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' lazy at the sea—
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay,
With our sick beneath the awnings when we went to Mandalay!
Oh, the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the Bay!

THE YOUNG BRITISH SOLDIER

When the 'arf-made recruity goes out to the East
'E acts like a babe an' 'e drinks like a beast,
An' 'e wonders because 'e is frequent deceased
Ere 'e's fit for to serve as a soldier.
Serve, serve, serve as a soldier,
Serve, serve, serve as a soldier,
Serve, serve, serve as a soldier,
So-oldier *hof* the Queen!

Now all you recruities what's drafted to-day,
You shut up your rag-box an' 'ark to my lay,
An' I'll sing you a soldier as far as I may:
A soldier what's fit for a soldier.
Fit, fit, fit for a soldier—

First, mind you steer clear o' the grog-sellers' huts,
For they sell you Fixed Bay'nets that rots out your guts—
Ay, drink that 'ud eat the live steel from your butts—
An' it's bad for the young British soldier.
Bad, bad, bad for the soldier—

When the cholera comes—as it will past a doubt—
Keep out of the wet and don't go on the shout,
For the sickness comes in as the liquor dies out,
An' it crumples the young British soldier.
Crum-, crum-, crumples the soldier—

But the worst o' your foes is the sun over-'ead;
You *must* wear your 'elmet for all that is said.
If 'e finds you uncovered 'e'll knock you down dead,
An' you'll die like a fool of a soldier.
Fool, fool, fool of a soldier—

If you're cast for fatigue by a sergeant unkind,

Don't grouse like a woman nor crack on nor blind;
Be handy and civil, and then you will find
As it's beer for the young British soldier.
Beer, beer, beer for the soldier—

Now, if you must marry, take care she is old—
A troop-sergeant's widow's the nicest I'm told—
For beauty won't help if your vittles is cold,
An' love ain't enough for a soldier.
'Nough, 'nough, 'nough for a soldier—

If the wife should go wrong with a comrade, be loath
To shoot when you catch 'em—you'll swing on my oath!—
Make 'im take 'er and keep 'er; that's hell for them both,
An' you're quit o' the curse of a soldier.
Curse, curse, curse of a soldier—

When first under fire an' you're wishful to duck,
Don't look or take 'eed at the man that is struck:
Be thankful you're livin' an' trust to your luck,
An' march to your front like a soldier.
Front, front, front like a soldier.

When 'arf of your bullets fly wide in the ditch,
Don't call your Martini a cross-eyed old bitch;
She's human as you are—you treat her as sich,
An' she'll fight for the young British soldier.
Fight, fight, fight for the soldier—

When shakin' their bustles like ladies so fine
The guns 'o the enemy wheel into line;
Shoot low at the limbers and don't mind the shine,
For noise never startles the soldier.
Start-, start-, startles the soldier—

If your officer's dead and the sergeants look white,
Remember it's ruin to run from a fight;
So take open order, lie down, and sit tight,
An' wait for supports like a soldier.
Wait, wait, wait, like a soldier—

When you're wounded an' left on Afghanistan's plains,
An' the women come out to cut up your remains,
Jest roll to your rifle an' blow out your brains,
An' go to your Gawd like a soldier:
Go, go, go like soldier,
Go, go, go like a soldier,
Go, go, go like a soldier
So-oldier *hof* the Queen.

SCREW-GUNS

Smokin' my pipe on the mountings, sniffin' the mornin'-cool,
I walks in my old brown gaiters along o' my old brown mule,
With seventy gunners be'ind me, an' never a beggar forgets
It's only the pick o' the Army that handles the dear little pets—Tss! Tss!

For you all love the screw-guns—the screw-guns they all love you.
So when we call round with a few guns, o' course you will know what to do—hoo! hoo!
Jest send in your Chief an' surrender—it's worse if you fights or you runs:
You can go where you please, you can skid up the trees, but you don't get away from the guns.

They send us along where the roads are, but mostly we goes where they ain't;
We'd climb up the side of a sign-board an' trust to the stick o' the paint;
We've chivied the Nava an' Lushai, we've give the Afreedeeman fits,
For we fancies ourselves at two thousand, we guns that are built in two bits—Tss! Tss!
For you all love the screw-guns—

If a man doesn't work, why, we drills 'im an' teaches 'im 'ow to be'ave,
If a beggar can't march, why, we kills 'im an' rattles 'im into 'is grave.
You've got to stand up to our business an' spring without snatchin' or fuss.
D'you say that you sweat with the field-guns? By God, you must lather with us—Tss! Tss!
For you all love the screw-guns—

The eagles is screamin' around us, the river's a-moanin' below,
We're clear o' the pine an' the oak-scrub, we're out on the rocks an' the snow,
An' the wind is as thin as a whip-lash what carries away to the plains
The rattle an' stamp o' the lead-mules—the jinglety-jink o' the chains—Tss! Tss!
For you all love the screw-guns—

There's a wheel on the Horns o' the Mornin' an' a wheel on the edge o' the Pit,
An' a drop into nothin' beneath us as straight as a beggar can spit;
With the sweat runnin' out o' your shirt-sleeves an' the sun off the snow in your face,
An' 'arf o' the men on the drag-ropes to hold the old gun in 'er place—Tss! Tss!
For you all love the screw-guns—

Smokin' my pipe on the mountings, sniffin' the mornin'-cool,
I climbs in my old brown gaiters along o' my old brown mule.

The monkey can say what our road was—the wild-goat 'e knows where we passed.
Stand easy, you long-eared old darlin's! Out drag-ropes! With shrapnel! Hold fast!—Tss! Tss!

For you all love the screw-guns—the screw-guns they all love you!
So when we take tea with a few guns, o' course you will know what to do—hoo! hoo!
Just send in your Chief and surrender—it's worse if you fights or you runs;
You may hide in the caves, they'll be only your graves, but you don't get away from the guns!

BELTS

THERE was a row in Silver Street that's near to Dublin Quay,
Between an Irish regiment an' English cavalree;
It started at Revelly an' it lasted on till dark;
The first man dropped at Harrison's the last forninst the Park.
For it was "Belts, belts, belts, an' that's one for you!"
An' it was "Belts, belts, belts, an' that's done for you!"

O buckle an' tongue
Was the song that we sung
From Harrison's on to the Park!

There was a row in Silver Street—the regiments was out,
They called us "Delhi Rebels," an' we answered "Threes about!"
That drew them like a hornet's nest—we met them good an' large,
The English at the double an' the Irish at the charge.
Then it was: Belts—

There was a row in Silver Street—an' I was in it too;
We passed the time o' day, an' then the belts went *whirraru!*
I misremember what occurred, but subsequint the storm
A *Freeman's Journal Supplemint* was all my uniform.
O it was: Belts—

There was a row in Silver Street—they sent the Polis there,
The English were too drunk to know, the Irish did't care;
But when they grew impertinint we simultaneous rose,
Till half o' them was Liffey mud an' half was tatthered clo'es.
For it was: Belts—

There was a row in Silver Street—it might ha' raged till now,
But some one drew his side-arm clear, an' nobody knew how;

'Twas Hogan took the point an' dropped; we
saw the red blood run:
An' so we all was murderers that started out
in fun.
While it was: Belts—

There was a row in Silver Street—but that
took off the shine,
Wid each man whishperin' to his next:
"'Twas never work o' mine!"
We went away like beaten dogs, an' down the
street we bore him,
The poor dumb corpse that couldn't see the
bhoys were sorry for him.
When it was: Belts—

There was a row in Silver Street—it isn't over
yet,
For half of us are under guard wid punish-
mints to get;
'Tis all a mericle to me as in the Clink I lie;
There was a row in Silver Street—begod, I
wonder why!
But it was "Belts, belts, belts, an'
that's one for you!"
An' it was "Belts, belts, belts, an'
that's done for you!"
O buckle an' tongue
Was the song that we sung
From Harrison's down to the Park!

FORD O' KABUL RIVER

KABUL town's by Kabul river—
Blow the bugle, draw the sword!—
There I left my mate forever,
Wet an' dripping' by the ford.
Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river.
Ford o' Kabul river in the dark!
There's the river up an' brimmin', an' there's 'arf a squadron swimmin'
'Cross the ford o' Kabul river in the dark.

Kabul town's a blasted place—
Blow the bugle, draw the sword!—
'Strewth I sha'n't forget 'is face,
Wet an' drippin' by the ford!
Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,
Ford o' Kabul river in the dark!
Keep the crossin'-stakes beside you, an' they will surely guide you
'Cross the ford o' Kabul river in the dark.

Kabul town is sun an' dust—
Blow the bugle, draw the sword!—
I'd ha' sooner drownded fust
'Stead of 'im beside the ford.
Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,
Ford o' Kabul river in the dark!
You can 'ear the 'orses thrashin', you can 'ear the men a-splashin'
'Cross the ford o' Kabul river in the dark.

Kabul town was ours to take—
Blow the bugle, draw the sword!—
I'd ha' left it for 'is sake—
'Im that left me by the ford.
Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,
Ford o' Kabul river in the dark!
It's none so bloomin' dry there, ain't you never comin' nigh there,
'Cross the ford o' Kabul river in the dark?

Kabul town'll go to hell—
Blow the bugle, draw the sword!—
'Fore I see 'im 'live an' well—
'Im the best beside the ford.
Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,
Ford o' Kabul river in the dark!
Gawd 'elp 'em if they blunder—for their boots'll pull 'em under,
By the ford o' Kabul river in the dark.

Turn your 'orse from Kabul town—
Blow the bugle, draw the sword!—
'Im an' 'arf my troop is down—
Down an' drownded by the ford.
Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,
Ford o' Kabul river in the dark!
There's the river low an' fallin', but it ain't no use o' callin'
'Cross the ford o' Kabul river in the dark.

ROUTE MARCHIN'

WE'RE marchin' on relief over Injia's sunny plains,
A little front o' Christmas-time an' just be'ind the Rains.
Ho! get away, you bullock-man! you've 'eard the bugle blowed—
There's a regiment a-comin' down the Grand Trunk Road—
With its best foot first,
An' the road a-slidin'past,
An' every bloomin' campin'-ground exactly like the last;
While the Big Drum says,
With 'is "Rowdy-dowdy-dow!"—
"*Kiko kissyvarsti* don't you *hamsher argy jow?*"

Oh, there's them Injian temples to admire when you see;
There's the peacock round the corner an' the monkey up the tree;
An' there's that rummy silver-grass a-wavin' in the wind,
An' the old Grand Trunk a-trailin' like a rifle-sling be'ind.
While it's best foot first, etc.

At half past five's Revelly, an' our tents they down must come,
Like a lot o' button mushrooms when you pick 'em up at 'ome.

But it's over in a minute, an' at six the column starts,
While the women an' the kiddies sit an' shiver in the carts.
An' it's best foot first, etc.
Oh, then it's open order, an' we lights our pipes an' sings,
An' we talks about our rations an' a lot of other things;
An' we thinks o' friends in England, an' we wonders what they're at,
An' 'ow they would admire for to 'ear us sling the *bat*.[1]
An' it's best foot first, etc.

It's none so bad o' Sunday, when you're lyin' at your ease,
To watch the kites a-wheelin' round them feather-'eaded trees—
For although there ain't no women, yet there ain't no barrick-yards,
So the orficers goes shootin' an' the men they plays at cards.
Till it's best foot first, etc.

So 'ark an' 'eed, you rookies, which is always grumblin' sore,—
There's worser things than marchin' from Umballa to Cawnpore;

[1] Thomas's first and firmest conviction is that he is a profound Orientalist and a fluent speaker of Hindustani. As a matter of fact, he depends largely on the sign-language.

An' if your 'eels are blistered, an' they feels to 'urt like 'ell,
You drop some tallow in your socks, an' that will make 'em well.
For it's best foot first, etc.
We're marchin' on relief over Injia's coral strand—
Eight 'undred fightin' Englishmen, the Colonel, *and* the Band.
Ho! get away, you bullock-man! you've 'eard the bugle blowed—
There's a regiment a-comin' down the Grand Trunk Road—
With its best foot first,
An' the road a-slidin'past,
An' every bloomin' campin'-ground exactly like the last;
While the big drum says,
With its "Rowdy-dowdy-dow!"
"*Kiko kissywarsti* don't you *hamsher argy jow?*"[1]

[1] Why don't you get on?

OTHER VERSES

TO THE UNKNOWN GODDESS

WILL you conquer my heart with your beauty; my soul going out from afar?
Shall I fall to your hand as a victim of crafty and cautious *shikar?*

Have I met you and passed you already, unknowing, unthinking and blind?
Shall I meet you next session at Simla, O sweetest and best of your kind?

Does the P. and O. bear you to me-ward, or, clad in short frocks in the West,
Are you growing the charms that shall capture and torture the heart in my breast?

Will you stay in the Plains till September—my passion as warm as the day?
Will you bring me to book on the Mountains, or where the thermantidotes play?

When the light of your eyes shall make pallid the mean lesser lights I pursue,
And the charm of your presence shall lure me from love of the gay "thirteen-two;"

When the peg and the pig-skin shall please
not; when I buy me Calcutta-built clothes;
When I quit the Delight of Wild Asses; for-
swearing the swearing of oaths;

As a deer to the hand of the hunter when I
turn 'mid the gibes of my friends;
When the days of my freedom are numbered,
and the life of the bachelor ends.

Ah Goddess! child, spinster, or widow—as of
old on Mars Hill when they raised
To the God that they knew not an altar—so
I, a young Pagan, have praised

The Goddess I know not nor worship; yet, if
half that men tell me be true,
You will come in the future, and therefore
these verses are written to you.

THE RUPAIYAT OF OMAR KAL VIN

[ALLOWING for the difference 'twixt prose and rhymed exaggeration, this ought to reproduce the sense of what Sir A—— told the nation some time ago, when the Government struck from our incomes two per cent.]

Now the New Year, reviving last Year's Debt,
The Thoughtful Fisher casteth wide his Net;
So I with begging Dish and ready Tongue
Assail all Men for all that I can get.

Imports indeed are gone with all their Dues—
Lo! Salt a Lever that I dare not use,
  Nor may I ask the Tillers in Bengal—
Surely my Kith and Kin will not refuse!

Pay—and I promise by the Dust of Spring,
Retrenchment. If my promises can bring
  Comfort, Ye have Them now a thousand-fold—
By Allah! I will promise *Anything!*

Indeed, indeed, Retrenchment oft before
I swore—but did I mean it when I swore?
  And then, and then, We wandered to the Hills,
And so the Little Less became Much More.

Whether at Boileaugunge or Babylon,
I know not how the wretched Thing is done,
  The Items of Receipt grow surely small;
The Items of Expense mount one by one.

I cannot help it. What have I to do
With One and Five, or Four, or Three, or Two?
  Let Scribes spit Blood and Sulphur as they please,
Or Statemen call me foolish—Heed not you.

Behold, I promise—Anything You will.
Behold, I greet you with an empty Till—
  Ah! Fellow-Sinners, of your Charity
Seek not the Reason of the Dearth, but fill.

For if I sinned and fell, where lies the Gain
Of Knowledge? Would it ease you of your Pain
To know the tangled Threads of Revenue,
I ravel deeper in a hopeless Skein?

"Who hath not Prudence"—what was it I said,
Of Her who paints her Eyes and tires Her Head,
And gibes and mocks the People in the Street,
And fawns upon them for Her thriftless Bread?

Accursed is She of Eve's daughters—She
Hath cast off Prudence, and Her End shall be
Destruction . . . Brethren, of your Bounty grant
Some portion of your daily Bread to *Me*.

LA NUIT BLANCHE

A MUCH-DISCERNING Public hold
The Singer generally sings
Of personal and private things,
And prints and sells his past for gold.

Whatever I may here disclaim,
The very clever folk I sing to
Will most indubitably cling to
Their pet delusion, just the same.

I HAD seen, as dawn was breaking
And I staggered to my rest,

Tari Devi softly shaking
From the Cart Road to the crest.
I had seen the spurs of Jakko
Heave and quiver, swell and sink.
Was it Earthquake or tobacco,
Day of Doom or Night of Drink?

In the full, fresh, fragrant morning
I observed a camel crawl,
Laws of gravitation scorning,
On the ceiling and the wall;
Then I watched a fender walking,
And I heard gray leeches sing,
And a red-hot monkey talking
Did not seem the proper thing.

Then a Creature, skinned and crimson,
Ran about the floor and cried,
And they said I had the "jims" on,
And they dosed me with bromide,
And they locked me in my bedroom—
Me and one wee Blood Red Mouse—
Though I said: "To give my head room
You had best unroof the house."

But my words were all unheeded,
Though I told the grave M. D.
That the treatment really needed
Was a dip in open sea
That was lapping just before me,
Smooth as silver, white as snow,
And it took three men to throw me
When I found I could not go.

Half the night I watched the Heavens
  Fizz like '81 champagne—
Fly to sixes and to sevens,
  Wheel and thunder back again;
And when all was peace and order
  Save one planet nailed askew,
Much I wept because my warder
  Would not let me set it true.

After frenzied hours of waiting,
  When the Earth and Skies were dumb,
Pealed an awful voice dictating
  An interminable sum,
Changing to a tangled story—
  "What she said you said I said—"
Till the Moon arose in glory,
  And found her . . . in my head;

Then a face came, blind and weeping,
  And It couldn't wipe Its eyes,
And It muttered I was keeping
  Back the moonlight from the skies;
So I patted It for pity,
  But It whistled shrill with wrath,
And a huge black Devil City
  Poured its peoples on my path.

So I fled with steps uncertain
  On a thousand-year long race,
But the bellying of the curtain
  Kept me always in one place;

While the tumult rose and maddened
To the roar of Earth on fire,
Ere it ebbed and sank and saddened
To a whisper tense as wire.

In intolerable stillness
Rose one little, little star,
And it chuckled at my illness,
And it mocked me from afar;
And its brethren came and eyed me,
Called the Universe to aid,
Till I lay, with naught to hide me,
'Neath the Scorn of All Things Made.

Dun and saffron, robed and splendid,
Broke the solemn, pitying Day,
And I knew my pains were ended,
And I turned and tried to pray;
But my speech was shattered wholly,
And I wept as children weep,
Till the dawn-wind, softly, slowly,
Brought to burning eyelids sleep.

MY RIVAL

I go to concert, party, ball—
What profit is in these?
I sit alone against the wall
And strive to look at ease.
The incense that is mine by right
They burn before Her shrine;
And that's because I'm seventeen
And She is forty-nine.

I cannot check my girlish blush,
My color comes and goes;
I redden to my finger-tips,
And sometimes to my nose.
But She is white where white should be,
And red where red should shine.
The blush that flies at seventeen
Is fixed at forty-nine.

I wish *I* had Her constant cheek:
I wish that I could sing
All sorts of funny little songs,
Not quite the proper thing.
I'm very *gauche* and very shy,
Her jokes aren't in my line;
And, worst of all, I'm seventeen
While She is forty-nine.

The young men come, the young men go
Each pink and white and neat,
She's older than their mothers, but
They grovel at Her feet.
They walk beside Her '*rickshaw* wheels—
None ever walk by mine;
And that's because I'm seventeen
And She is forty-nine.

She rides with half a dozen men,
(She calls them "boys" and "mashers")
I trot along the Mall alone;
My prettiest frocks and sashes
Don't help to fill my program-card,
And vainly I repine

From ten to two A.M. Ah me!
Would I were forty-nine!

She calls me "darling," "pet," and "dear,"
And "sweet retiring maid."
I'm always at the back, I know,
She puts me in the shade.
She introduces me to men,
"Cast" lovers, I opine,
For sixty takes to seventeen,
Nineteen to forty-nine.

But even She must older grow
And end Her dancing days,
She can't go on forever so
At concerts, balls, and plays.
One ray of priceless hope I see
Before my footsteps shine;
Just think, that She'll be eighty-one
When I am forty-nine.

THE LOVERS' LITANY

EYES of gray—a sodden quay,
Driving rain and falling tears,
As the steamer wears to sea
In a parting storm of cheers.
Sing, for Faith and Hope are high—
None so true as you and I—
Sing the Lovers' Litany:—
"*Love like ours can never die!*"

Eyes of black—a throbbing keel,
Milky foam to left and right;
Whispered converse near the wheel
In the brilliant tropic night.
Cross that rules the Southern Sky!
Stars that sweep and wheel and fly,
Hear the Lovers' Litany—
"*Love like ours can never die!*"

Eyes of brown—a dusty plain
Spit and parched with heat of June,
Flying hoof and tightened rein,
Hearts that beat the old, old tune.
Side by side the horses fly,
Frame we now the old reply
Of the Lover's Litany:—
"*Love like ours can never die!*"

Eyes of blue—the Simla Hills
Silvered with the moonlight hoar;
Pleading of the waltz that thrills,
Dies and echoes round Benmore.
"*Mabel*," "*Officers*," "*Good-by*,"
Glamour, wine, and witchery—
On my soul's sincerity,
"*Love like ours can never die!*"

Maidens, of your charity,
Pity my most luckless state,
Four times Cupid's debtor I—
Bankrupt in quadruplicate.

Yet, despite this evil case,
An a maiden showed me grace,
Four-and-Forty times would I
Sing the Lovers' Litany:—
"Love like ours can never die!"

A BALLAD OF BURIAL

("Saint Praxed's ever was the Church for peace.")

If down here I chance to die,
Solemnly I beg you take
All that is left of "I"
To the Hills for old sake's sake,
Pack me very thoroughly
In the ice that used to slake
Pegs I drank when I was dry—
This observe for old sake's sake.

To the railway station hie,
There a single ticket take
For Umballa—goods-train— I
Shall not mind delay or shake.
I shall rest contentedly
Spite of clamor coolies make;
Thus in state and dignity
Send me up for old sake's sake.

Next the sleepy Babu wake,
Book a Kalka van "for four."
Few, I think, will care to make
Journeys with me any more

As they used to do of yore.
I shall need a "special" break—
Thing I never took before—
Get me one for old sake's sake.

After that—arrangements make.
No hotel will take me in,
And a bullock's back would break
'Neath the teak and leaden skin.
Tonga ropes are frail and thin,
Or, did I a back-seat take,
In a tonga I might spin,—
Do your best for old sake's sake.

After that—your work is done.
Recollect a Padre must
Mourn the dear departed one—
Throw the ashes and the dust.
Don't go down at once. I trust
You will find excuse to "snake
Three days' casual on the bust,"
Get your fun for old sake's sake.

I could never stand the Plains.
Think of blazing June and May,
Think of those September rains
Yearly till the Judgment Day!
I should never rest in peace,
I should sweat and lie awake.
Rail me then, on my decease,
To the Hills for old sake's sake.

THE MARE'S NEST

JANE Austen Beecher Stowe de Rouse
Was good beyond all earthly need ;
But, on the other hand, her spouse
Was very, very bad indeed.
He smoked cigars, called churches slow,
And raced—but this she did not know.

For Belial Machiavelli kept
The little fact a secret, and,
Though o'er his minor sins she wept,
Jane Austen did not understand
That Lilly—thirteen-two and bay—
Absorbed one half her husband's pay.

She was so good, she made him worse ;
(Some women are like this, I think ;)
He taught her parrot how to curse,
Her Assam monkey how to drink.
He vexed her righteous soul until
She went up, and he went down hill.

Then came the crisis, strange to say,
Which turned a good wife to a better.
A telegraphic peon, one day,
Brought her—now, had it been a letter
For Belial Machiavelli, I
Know Jane would just have let it lie.

But 'twas a telegram instead,
Marked " urgent," and her duty plain

To open it. Jane Austen read :—
"Your Lilly's got a cough again.
Can't understand why she is kept
At your expense." Jane Austen wept.

It was a misdirected wire.
Her husband was at Shaitanpore.
She spread her anger, hot as fire,
Through six thin foreign sheets or more.
Sent off that letter, wrote another
To her solicitor—and mother.

Then Belial Machiavelli saw
Her error and, I trust, his own,
Wired to the minion of the Law,
And traveled wifeward—not alone.
For Lilly—thirteen-two and bay—
Came in a horse-box all the way.

There was a scene—a weep or two—
With many kisses. Austen Jane
Rode Lilly all the season through,
And never opened wires again.
She races now with Belial. This
Is very sad but so it is.

POSSIBILITIES

Ay, lay him 'neath the Simla pine—
A fortnight fully to be missed,
Behold, we lose our fourth at whist,
A chair is vacant where we dine.

His place forgets him; other men
Have bought his ponies, guns, and traps.
His fortune is the Great Perhaps
And that cool rest-house down the glen,

Whence he shall hear, as spirits may,
Our mundane revel on the height,
Shall watch each flashing *rickshaw*-light
Sweep on to dinner, dance, and play.

Benmore shall woo him to the ball
With lighted rooms and braying band,
And he shall hear and understand
"*Dream Faces*" better than us all.

For, think you, as the vapors flee
Across Sanjaolie after rain,
His soul may climb the hill again
To each old field of victory.

Unseen, who women held so dear,
The strong man's yearning to his kind
Shall shake at most the window-blind,
Or dull awhile the card-room's cheer.

In his own place of power unknown,
His Light o' Love another's flame,
His dearest pony galloped lame,
And he an alien and alone.

Yet may he meet with many a friend—
Shrewd shadows, lingering long unseen
Among us when "*God save the Queen*"
Shows even "extras" have an end.

And, when we leave the heated room,
And, when at four the lights expire,
The crew shall gather round the fire
And mock our laughter in the gloom.

Talk as we talk, and they ere death—
First wanly, dance in ghostly wise,
With ghosts of tunes for melodies,
And vanish at the morning's breath.

CHRISTMAS IN INDIA

Dim dawn behind the tamarisks—the sky is saffron-yellow—
As the women in the village grind the corn,
And the parrots seek the river-side, each calling to his fellow
That the Day, the staring Eastern Day is born.
Oh the white dust on the highway! Oh the stenches in the byway!
Oh the clammy fog that hovers over earth!
And at Home they're making merry 'neath the white and scarlet berry—
What part have India's exiles in their mirth?

Full day behind the tamarisks—the sky is blue and staring—
As the cattle crawl afield beneath the yoke,

And they bear One o'er the field-path, who is
past all hope or caring,
To the ghât below the curling wreaths of
smoke.
Call on Rama, going slowly, as ye bear
a brother lowly
Call on Rama—he may hear, perhaps,
your voice!
With our hymn-books and our psalters
we appeal to other altars,
And to-day we bid "good Christian
men rejoice!"

High noon behind the tamarisks—the sun is
hot above us—
As at Home the Christmas Day is breaking
wan.
They will drink our healths at dinner—those
who tell us how they love us,
And forget us till another year be gone!
Oh the toil that knows no breaking!
Oh the *Heimweh*, ceaseless, aching!
Oh the black dividing Sea and alien
Plain!
Youth was cheap—wherefore we sold it,
Gold was good—we hoped to hold it,
And to-day we know the fulness of our
gain.

Gray dusk behind the tamarisks—the parrots
fly together—
As the sun is sinking slowly over Home;

And his last ray seems to mock us shackled in a lifelong tether
That drags us back howe'er so far we roam.
Hard her service, poor her payment—she in ancient, tattered raiment—
India, she the grim Stepmother of our kind.
If a year of life be lent her, if her temple's shrine we enter,
The door is shut—we may not look behind.

Black night behind the tamarisks—the owls begin their chorus—
As the conches from the temple scream and bray.
With the fruitless years behind us, and the hopeless years before us,
Let us honor, O my brothers, Christmas Day!
Call a truce, then, to our labors—let us feast with friends and neighbors,
And be merry as the custom of our caste;
For if "faint and forced the laughter," and if sadness follow after,
We are richer by one mocking Christmas past.

PAGETT, M. P.

> The toad beneath the harrow knows
> Exactly where each tooth-point goes.
> The butterfly upon the road
> Preaches contentment to that toad.

Pagett, M. P., was a liar, and a fluent liar therewith,—
He spoke of the heat of India as the "Asian Solar Myth;"
Came on a four months' visit, to "study the East," in November,
And I got him to sign an agreement vowing to stay till September.

March came in with the *köil*. Pagett was cool and gay,
Called me a "bloated Brahmin," talked of my "princely pay."
March went out with the roses. "Where is your heat?" said he.
"Coming," said I to Pagett. "Skittles!" said Pagett, M. P.

April began with the punkah, coolies, and prickly-heat,—
Pagett was dear to mosquitoes, sandflies found him a treat.
He grew speckled and lumpy—hammered, I grieve to say,
Aryan brothers who fanned him, in an illiberal way.

May set in with a dust-storm,—Pagett went
down with the sun.
All the delights of the season tickled him one
by one.
Imprimis—ten days' "liver"—due to his
drinking beer;
Later, a dose of fever—slight, but he called
it severe.

Dysent'ry touched him in June, after the *Chota
Bursat*—
Lowered his portly person—made him yearn
to depart.
He didn't call me a "Brahmin," or "bloated,"
or "overpaid,"
But seemed to think it a wonder that any one
stayed.

July was a trifle unhealthy,—Pagett was ill
with fear,
'Called it the "Cholera Morbus," hinted that
life was dear.
He babbled of "Eastern exile," and mentioned
his home with tears;
But I hadn't seen *my* children for close upon
seven years.

We reached a hundred and twenty once in the
Court at noon,
(I've mentioned Pagett was portly) Pagett
went off in a swoon.

That was an end to the business; Pagett, the perjured, fled
With a practical, working knowledge of "Solar Myths" in his head.

And I laughed as I drove from the station, but the mirth died out on my lips
As I thought of the fools like Pagett who write of their "Eastern trips,"
And the sneers of the traveled idiots who duly misgovern the land,
And I prayed to the Lord to deliver another one into my hand.

THE SONG OF THE WOMEN

(*Lady Dufferin's Fund for medical aid to the Women of India.*)

How shall we know the worship we would do her?
The walls are high, and she is very far.
How shall the women's message reach unto her
Above the tumult of the packed bazar?
Free wind of March, against the lattice blowing,
Bear thou our thanks, lest she depart unknowing.

Go forth across the fields we may not roam in,
Go forth beyond the trees that rim the city

To whatsoe'er fair place she hath her home in,
Who dowered us with wealth of love and pity.
Out of our shadow pass, and seek her singing—
"I have no gifts but Love alone for bringing."

Say that we be a feeble folk who greet her,
But old in grief, and very wise in tears;
Say that we, being desolate, entreat her
That she forget us not in after years;
For we have seen the light, and it were grievous
To dim that dawning if our lady leave us.

By life that ebbed with none to stanch the failing,
By Love's sad harvest garnered in the spring,
When Love in ignorance wept unavailing
O'er young buds dead before their blossoming;
By all the gray owl watched, the pale moon viewed,
In past grim years, declare our gratitude!

By hands uplifted to the Gods that heard not,
By gifts that found no favor in their sight,
By faces bent above the babe that stirred not,
By nameless horrors of the stifling night;
By ills foredone, by peace her toils discover,
Bid Earth be good beneath and Heaven above her!

If she have sent her servants in our pain,
If she have fought with Death and dulled his sword;
If she have given back our sick again,
And to the breast the weakling lips restored.
Is it a little thing that she has wrought?
Then Life and Death and Motherhood be nought.

Go forth, O wind, our message on thy wings,
And they shall hear thee pass and bid thee speed,
In reed-roofed hut, or white-walled home of kings,
Who have been helpen by her in their need.
All spring shall give thee fragrance, and the wheat
Shall be a tasseled floorcloth to thy feet.

Haste, for our hearts are with thee, take no rest!
Loud-voiced ambassador, from sea to sea
Proclaim the blessing, manifold, confest,
Of those in darkness by her hand set free,
Then very softly to her presence move,
And whisper: "Lady, lo, they know and love!"

A BALLADE OF JAKKO HILL

One moment bid the horses wait,
Since Tiffin is not laid till three,
Below the upward path and straight
You climbed a year ago with me.

Love came upon us suddenly
And loosed—an idle hour to kill—
A headless, armless armory
That smote us both on Jakko Hill.

Ah Heaven! we would wait and wait
Through Time and to Eternity!
Ah Heaven! we could conquer Fate
With more than Godlike constancy!
I cut the date upon a tree—
Here stand the clumsy figures still:—
"10–7–85, A.D."
Damp with the mist on Jakko Hill.

What came of high resolve and great,
And until Death fidelity?
Whose horse is waiting at your gate?
Whose *'rickshaw*-wheels ride over me?
No Saint's, I swear; and—let me see
To-night what names your program fill—
We drift asunder merrily,
As drifts the mist on Jakko Hill!

L'ENVOI

Princess, behold our ancient state
Has clean departed; and we see
'Twas idleness we took for Fate
That bound light bonds on you and me.
Amen! Here ends the comedy
Where it began in all good will;
Since Love and Leave together flee
As driven mist on Jakko Hill!

THE PLEA OF THE SIMLA DANCERS

Too late, alas! the song
To remedy the wrong;—
The room are taken from us, swept and garnished for their fate.
But these tear-besprinkled pages
Shall attest to future ages
That we cried against the crime of it—too late, alas! too late!

"WHAT have *we* ever done to bear this grudge?"
Was there no room save only in Benmore
For docket, *duftar*, and for office drudge,
That you usurp our smoothest dancing floor?
Must babus do their work on polished teak?
Are ball-rooms fittest for the ink you spill?
Was there no other cheaper house to seek?
You might have left them all at Strawberry Hill.

We never harmed you! Innocent our guise,
Dainty our shining feet, our voices low;
And we revolved to divers melodies,
And we were happy but a year ago.
To-night, the moon that watched our lightsome wiles—
That beamed upon us through the deodars—
Is wan with gazing on official files,
And desecrating desks disgust the stars.

Nay! by the memory of tuneful nights—
Nay! by the witchery of flying feet—
Nay! by the glamour of fordone delights—
By all things merry, musical, and meet—
By wine that sparkled, and by sparkling eyes—
By wailing waltz—by reckless gallop's strain—
By dim verandas and by soft replies,
Give us our ravished ball-room back again!

Or—hearken to the curse we lay on you—
The ghosts of waltzes shall perplex your brain,
And murmurs of past merriment pursue
Your wildered clerks that they indite in vain;
And, when you count your poor Provincial millions,
The only figures that your pen shall frame
Shall be the figures of dear, dear cotillions
Danced out in tumult long before you came.

Yea! "*See Saw*" shall upset your estimates,
"*Dream Faces*" shall your heavy heads bemuse,
Because your hand, unheeding, desecrates
Our temple; fit for higher, worthier use.
And all the long verandas, eloquent
With echoes of a score of Simla years,
Shall plague you with unbidden sentiment—
Babbling of kisses, laughter, love, and tears.

So shall you mazed amid old memories stand,
So shall you toil, and shall accomplish nought,
And ever in your ears a phantom Band
Shall blare away the staid official thought.
Wherefore—and ere this awful curse be spoken,
Cast out your swarthy sacrilegious train,
And give ere dancing cease and hearts be broken—
Give us our ravished ball-room back again!

BALLAD OF FISHER'S BOARDING-HOUSE

THAT night, when through the mooring-chains
The wide-eyed corpse rolled free,
To blunder down by Garden Reach
And rot at Kedgeree,
The tale the Hughli told the shoal
The lean shoal told to me.

'TWAS Fultah Fisher's boarding-house
Where sailor-men reside,
And there were men of all the ports
From Mississip to Clyde,
And regally they spat and smoked,
And fearsomely they lied.

They lied about the purple Sea
That gave them scanty bread,

They lied about the Earth beneath,
The Heavens overhead,
For they had looked too often on
Black rum when that was red.

They told their tales of wreck and wrong,
Of shame and lust and fraud,
They backed their toughest statements with
The Brimstone of the Lord,
And crackling oaths went to and fro
Across the fist-banged board.

And there was Hans the blue-eyed Dane,
Bull-throated, bare of arm,
Who carried on his hairy chest
The maid Ultruda's charm—
The little silver crucifix
That keeps a man from harm.

And there was Jake Without-the-Ears,
And Pamba the Malay,
And Carboy Gin the Guinea cook,
And Luz from Vigo Bay,
And Honest Jack who sold them slops
And harvested their pay.

And there was Salem Hardieker,
A lean Bostonian he—
Russ, German, English, Halfbreed, Finn,
Yank, Dane, and Portugee,
At Fultah Fisher's boarding-house
They rested from the sea.

Now Anne of Austria shared their drinks
  Collinga knew her fame,
From Tarnau in Galicia
  To Jaun Bazar she came,
To eat the bread of infamy
  And take the wage of shame.

She held a dozen men to heel—
  Rich spoil of war was hers,
  In hose and gown and ring and chain,
  From twenty mariners,
And, by Port Law, that week, men called
  Her Salem Hardieker's.

But seamen learnt—what landsmen know—
  That neither gifts nor gain
Can hold a winking Light o' Love
  Or Fancy's flight restrain,
When Anne of Austria rolled her eyes
  On Hans the blue-eyed Dane.

Since Life is strife, and strife means knife,
  From Howrah to the Bay,
And he may die before the dawn
  Who liquored out the day,
In Fultah Fisher's boarding-house
  We woo while yet we may.

But cold was Hans the blue-eyed Dane,
  Bull-throated, bare of arm,
And laughter shook the chest beneath
  The maid Ultruda's charm—
The little silver crucifix
  That keeps a man from harm.

"You speak to Salem Hardieker,
You was his girl, I know.
I ship mineselfs to-morrow, see,
Und round the Skaw we go,
South, down the Cattegat, by Hjelm,
To Besser in Saro."

When love rejected turns to hate,
All ill betide the man.
"You speak to Salem Hardieker"—
She spoke as woman can.
A scream—a sob—"He called me—names!"
And then the fray began.

An oath from Salem Hardieker,
A shriek upon the stairs,
A dance of shadows on the wall,
A knife-thrust unawares—
And Hans came down, as cattle drop,
Across the broken chairs.

. . . . .

In Anne of Austria's trembling hands
The weary head fell low:—
"I ship mineselfs to-morrow, straight
For Besser in Saro:
Und there Ultruda comes to me
At Easter, und I go

"South, down the Cattegat— What's here?
There—are—no—lights—to—guide!"
The mutter ceased, the spirit passed,
And Anne of Austria cried
In Fultah Fisher's boarding-house
When Hans the mighty died.

Thus slew they Hans the blue-eyed Dane,
Bull-throated, bare of arm,
But Anne of Austria looted first
The maid Ultruda's charm—
The little silver crucifix
That keeps a man from harm.

"AS THE BELL CLINKS"

As I left the Halls at Lumley, rose the vision of a comely
Maid last season worshiped dumbly, watched with fervor from afar;
And I wondered idly, blindly, if the maid would greet me kindly.
That was all—the rest was settled by the clinking tonga-bar.
Yea, my life and hers were coupled by the tonga coupling bar.

For my misty meditation, at the second changing-station,
Suffered sudden dislocation, fled before the tuneless jar
Of a Wagner *obbligato*, *scherzo*, double-hand *staccato*,
Played on either pony's saddle by the clacking tonga-bar—
Played with human speech, I fancied, by the jigging, jolting bar.

"She was sweet," thought I, "last season, but
'twere surely wild unreason
Such tiny hope to freeze on as was offered by
my Star,
When she whispered, something sadly :—'I—
we feel your going badly!'"
"*And you let the chance escape you?*" rapped
the rattling tonga-bar.
"*What a chance and what an idiot!*" clicked
the vicious tonga-bar.

Heart of man—oh, heart of putty! Had I
gone by Kakahutti,
On the old Hill-road and rutty, I had 'scaped
that fatal car.
But his fortune each must bide by, so I watched
the milestones slide by,
To "*You call on Her to-morrow!*"—fugue
with cymbals by the bar—
"*You must call on Her to-morrow!*"—post-
horn gallop by the bar.

Yet a further stage my goal on—we were
whirling down to Solon,
With a double lurch and roll on, best foot
foremost, *ganz und gar*—
"She was *very* sweet," I hinted. "If a kiss
had been imprinted—?"
"'*Would ha' saved a world of trouble!*"
clashed the busy tonga-bar.
"'*Been accepted or rejected!*" banged and
clanged the tonga-bar.

Then a notion wild and daring, 'spite the income tax's paring,
And a hasty thought of sharing—less than many incomes are,
Made me put a question private, you can guess what I would drive at.
"*You must work the sum to prove it,*" clanked the careless tonga-bar.
"*Simple Rule of Two will prove it,*" lilted back the tonga-bar.

It was under Khyraghaut I mused:—"Suppose the maid be haughty—
(There are lovers rich—and forty)—wait some wealthy Avatar?
Answer, monitor untiring, 'twixt the ponies twain perspiring!"
"*Faint heart never won fair lady,*" creaked the straining tonga-bar.
"*Can I tell you ere you ask Her?*" pounded slow the tonga-bar.

Last, the Tara Devi turning showed the lights of Simla burning,
Lit my little lazy yearning to a fiercer flame by far.
As below the Mall we jingled, through my very heart it tingled—
Did the iterated order of the threshing tonga-bar—
"*Try your luck—you can't do better!*" twanged the loosened tonga-bar.

AN OLD SONG

So long as 'neath the Kalka hills
The tonga-horn shall ring,
So long as down the Solon dip
The hard-held ponies swing,
So long as Tara Devi sees
The lights o' Simla town,
So long as Pleasure calls us up,
And duty drives us down,
If you love me as I love you,
What pair so happy as we two?

So long as Aces take the King,
Or backers take the bet,
So long as debt leads men to wed,
Or marriage leads to debt,
So long as little luncheons, Love,
And scandal hold their vogue,
While there is sport at Annandale
Or whisky at Jutogh,
If you love me as I love you,
What knife can cut our love in two?

So long as down the rocking floor
The raving polka spins,
So long as Kitchen Lancers spur
The maddened violins,
So long as through the whirling smoke
We hear the oft-told tale:—

"Twelve hundred in the Lotteries,"
And *Whatshername* for sale?
If you love me as I love you,
We'll play the game and win it too.

So long as Lust or Lucre tempt
Straight riders from the course,
So long as with each drink we pour
Black brewage of Remorse,
So long as those unloaded guns
We keep beside the bed
Blow off, by obvious accident,
The lucky owner's head,
If you love me as I love you,
What can Life kill or Death undo?

So long as Death 'twixt dance and dance
Chills best and bravest blood,
And drops the reckless rider down
The rotten, rain-soaked *khud*,
So long as rumors from the North
Make loving wives afraid,
So long as Burma takes the boy
And typhoid kills the maid,
If you love me as I love you,
What knife can cut our love in two?

By all that lights our daily life
Or works our lifelong woe,
From Boileaugunge to Simla Downs
And those grim glades below,
Where, heedless of the flying hoot
And clamor overhead,

Sleep, with the gray langur for guard,
Our very scornful Dead,
If you love me as I love you,
All Earth is servant to us two?

By Docket, Billetdoux, and File,
By Mountain, Cliff, and Fir,
By Fan and Sword and Office-box,
By Corset, Plume, and Spur,
By Riot, Revel, Waltz, and War,
By Women, Work, and Bills,
By all the life that fizzes in
The everlasting Hills,
If you love me as I love you,
What pair so happy as we two?

CERTAIN MAXIMS OF HAFIZ

I.

If It be pleasant to look on, stalled in the packed *serai*,
Does not the Young Man try Its temper and pace ere he buy?
If She be pleasant to look on, what does the Young Man say?
"Lo! She is pleasant to look on, give Her to me to-day!"

II.

Yea, though a Kafir die, to him is remitted Jehannum
If he borrowed in life from a native at sixty per cent per annum.

III.

Blister we not for *bursati?* So when the heart is vext,
The pain of one maiden's refusal is drowned in the pain of the next.

IV.

The temper of chums, the love of your wife, and a new piano's tune—
Which of the three will you trust at the end of an Indian June?

V.

Who are the rulers of Ind—to whom shall we bow the knee?
Make your peace with the women, and men will make you L. G.

VI.

Does the woodpecker flit round the young *ferash?* Does grass clothe a new-built wall?
Is she under thirty, the woman who holds a boy in her thrall?

VII.

If She grow suddenly gracious—reflect. Is it all for thee?
The black-buck is stalked through the bullock, and Man through jealousy.

VIII.

Seek not for favor of women. So shall you find it indeed.
Does not the boar break cover just when you're lighting a weed?

IX.

If He play, being young and unskilful, for shekels of silver and gold,
Take His money, my son, praising Allah. The kid was ordained to be sold.

X.

With a "weed" among men or horses verily this is the best,
That you work him in office or dog-cart lightly —but give him no rest.

XI.

Pleasant the snaffle of Courtship, improving the manners and carriage;
But the colt who is wise will abstain from the terrible thorn-bit of Marriage.

XII.

As the thriftless gold of the *babul*, so is the gold that we spend
On a Derby Sweep, or our neighbor's wife, or the horse that we buy from a friend.

XIII.

The ways of man with a maid be strange, yet simple and tame
To the ways of a man with a horse, when selling or racing that same.

XIV.

In public Her face turneth to thee, and pleasant Her smile when ye meet.
It is ill. The cold rocks of El-Gidar smile thus on the waves at their feet.
In public Her face is averted, with anger She nameth thy name.
It is well. Was there ever a loser content with the loss of a game?

XV.

If She have spoken a word, remember thy lips are sealed,
And the Brand of the Dog is upon him by whom is the secret revealed.
If She have written a letter, delay not an instant, but burn it.
Tear it in pieces, O Fool, and the wind to her mate shall return it!
If there be trouble to Herward, and a lie of the blackest can clear,
Lie, while thy lips can move or a man is alive to hear.

XVI.

My Son, if a maiden deny thee and scufflingly bid thee give o'er,

Yet lip meets with lip at the lastward—get out! She has been there before.
They are pecked on the ear and the chin and the nose who are lacking in lore.

XVII.

If we fall in the race, though we win, the hoof-slide is scarred on the course.
Though Allah and Earth pardon Sin, remaineth forever Remorse.

XVII.

"By all I am misunderstood!" if the Matron shall say, or the Maid:—
"Alas! I do not understand," my son, be thou nowise afraid.
In vain in the sight of the Bird is the net of the Fowler displayed.

XIX.

My son, if I, Hafiz, thy father, take hold of thy knees in my pain,
Demanding thy name on stamped paper, one day or one hour—refrain.
Are the links of thy fetters so light that thou cravest another man's chain?

THE GRAVE OF THE HUNDRED HEAD

THERE'S a widow in sleepy Chester,
Who weeps for her only son;
There's a grave on the Pabeng River,
A grave that the Burmans shun,
And there's Subadar Prag Tewarri
Who tells how the work was done.

A SNIDER squibbed in the jungle,
Somebody laughed and fled,
And the men of the First Shikaris
Picked up their Subaltern dead,
With a big blue mark in his forehead
And the back blown out of his head.

Subadar Prag Tewarri,
Jemadar Hira Lal,
Took command of the party,
Twenty rifles in all,
Marched them down to the river
As the day was beginning to fall.

Then buried the boy by the river,
A blanket over his face—
They wept for their dead Lieutenant,
The men of an alien race—
They made a *samádh* in his honor,
A mark for his resting-place.

For they swore by the Holy Water,
They swore by the salt they ate,
That the soul of Lieutenant Eshmitt **Sahib**
Should go to his God in state;
With fifty file of Burman
To open him Heaven's gate.

The men of the First Shikaris
Marched till the break of day,
Till they came to the rebel village,
The village of Pabengmay—
A *jingal* covered the clearing,
Calthrops hampered the way.

Subadar Prag Tewarri,
Bidding them load with ball,
Halted a dozen rifles
Under the village wall;
Sent out a flanking-party
With Jemadar Hira Lal.

The men of the First Shikaris
Shouted and smote and slew,
Turning the grinning *jingal*
On to the howling crew.
The Jemadar's flanking-party
Butchered the folk who flew.

Long was the morn of slaughter,
Long was the list of slain,

Five score heads were taken,
Five score heads and twain;
And the men of the First Shikaris
Went back to their grave again,

Each man bearing a basket
Red as his palms that day,
Red as the blazing village—
The village of Pabengmay.
And the "*drip-drip-drip*" from the baskets
Reddened the grass by the way.

They made a pile of their trophies
High as a tall man's chin,
Head upon head distorted,
Set in a sightless grin,
Anger and pain and terror
Stamped on the smoke-scorched skin.

Subadar Prag Tewarri
Put the head of the Boh
On the top of the mound of triumph,
The head of his son below,
With the sword and the peacock-banner
That the world might behold and know.

Thus the *samádh* was perfect,
Thus was the lesson plain
Of the wrath of the First Shikaris—
The price of a white man slain;
And the men of the First Shikaris
Went back into camp again.

Then a silence came to the river,
A hush fell fell over the shore,
And Bohs that were brave departed,
And Sniders squibbed no more;
For the Burmans said that a *kullah's* head
Must be paid for with heads five score.

There's a widow in sleepy Chester
Who weeps for her only son;
There's a grave on the Pabeng River,
A grave that the Burmans shun,
And there's Subadar Prag Tewarri
Who tells how the work was done.

THE MOON OF OTHER DAYS

BENEATH the deep veranda's shade,
When bats begin to fly,
I sit me down and watch—alas!—
Another evening die.
Blood-red behind the sere *ferash*
She rises through the haze.
Sainted Diana! can that be
The moon of Other Days?

Ah! shade of little Kitty Smith,
Sweet Saint of Kensington!
Say, was it ever thus at home
The Moon of August shone,
When arm in arm we wandered long
Through Putney's evening haze,
And Hammersmith was Heaven beneath
The Moon of Other Days?

But Wandle's stream is Sutlej now,
And Putney's evening haze
The dust that half a hundred kine
Before my window raise.
Unkempt, unclean, athwart the mist
The seething city looms,
In place of Putney's golden gorse
The sickly *babul* blooms.

Glare down, old Hecate, through the dust
And bid the pie-dog yell,
Draw from the drain its typhoid-germ,
From each bazaar its smell;
Yea, suck the fever from the tank
And sap my strength therewith:
Thank Heaven, you show a smiling face
To little Kitty Smith!

THE OVERLAND MAIL

(*Foot-Service to the Hills.*)

In the name of the Empress of India, make way,
O Lords of the Jungle, wherever you roam.
The woods are astir at the close of the day—
We exiles are waiting for letters from Home.
Let the robber retreat—let the tiger turn tail—
In the Name of the Empress, the Overland Mail!

With a jingle of bells as the dust gathers in,
He turns to the foot-path that heads up the hill—
The bags on his back and a cloth round his chin,
And, tucked in his waist-belt, the Post-Office bill :—
"Despatched on this date, as received by the rail,
Per runner, two bags of the Overland Mail."

Is the torrent in spate? He must ford it or swim.
Has the rain wrecked the road? He must climb by the cliff.
Does the tempest cry "Halt"? What are tempests to him?
The Service admits not a "but" or an "if."
While the breath's in his mouth, he must bear without fail,
In the Name of the Empress, the Overland Mail.

From aloe to rose, from rose-oak to fir,
From level to upland, from upland to crest,
From rice-field to rock-ridge, from rock-ridge to spur,
Fly the soft sandaled feet, strains the brawny brown chest.
From rail to ravine—to the peak from the vale—
Up, up through the night goes the Overland Mail.

There's a speck on the hillside, a dot on the road—
A jingle of bells on the foot-path below—
There's a scuffle above in the monkey's abode—
The world is awake, and the clouds are aglow.
For the great Sun himself must attend to the hail :—
"In the name of the Empress, the Overland Mail!"

WHAT THE PEOPLE SAID

(*June 21st, 1887.*)

By the well, where the bullocks go
Silent and blind and slow—
By the field where the young corn dies
In the face of the sultry skies,
They have heard, as the dull Earth hears
The voice of the wind of an hour,
The sound of the Great Queen's voice :—
"My God hath given me years,
Hath granted dominion and power :
And I bid you, O Land, rejoice."

And the Plowman settles the share
More deep in the grudging clod ;
For he saith : "The wheat is my care,
And the rest is the will of God.

"He sent the Mahratta spear
As He sendeth the rain,
And the *Mlech*, in the fated year,
Broke the spear in twain,
And was broken in turn. Who knows
How our Lords make strife?
It is good that the young wheat grows,
For the bread is Life."

Then, far and near, as the twilight drew,
Hissed up to the scornful dark
Great serpents, blazing, of red and blue,
That rose and faded, and rose anew,
That the Land might wonder and mark.
"To-day is a day of days," they said,
"Make merry, O People, all!"
And the Plowman listened and bowed his head:—
"To-day and to-morrow God's will," he said,
As he trimmed the lamps on the wall.

"He sendeth us years that are good,
As He sendeth the dearth.
He giveth to each man his food,
Or Her food to the Earth.
Our Kings and our Queens are afar—
On their peoples be peace—
God bringeth the rain to the Bar,
That our cattle increase."

And the Plowman settled the share
More deep in the sun-dried clod:—

"Mogul, Mahratta, and *Mlech* from the North,
And White Queen over the Seas—
God raiseth them up and driveth them forth
As the dust of the plowshare flies in the breeze;
But the wheat and the cattle are all my care,
And the rest is the will of God."

THE UNDERTAKER'S HORSE

"To-tschin-shu is condemned to death. How can he drink tea with the Executioner?"—*Japanese Proverb.*

The eldest son bestrides him,
And the pretty daughter rides him,
And I meet him oft o' mornings on the Course;
And there wakens in my bosom
An emotion chill and gruesome
As I canter past the Undertaker's Horse.

Neither shies he nor is restive,
But a hideously suggestive
Trot, professional and placid, he affects;
And the cadence of his hoof-beats
To my mind, this grim reproof beats:—
"Mend your pace, my friend, I'm coming. Who's the next?"

Ah! stud-bred of ill-omen,
I have watched the strongest go—men

Of pith and might and muscle—at your heels,
Down the plantain-bordered highway,
(Heaven send it ne'er be my way!)
In a lacquered box and jetty upon wheels.

Answer, somber beast and dreary,
Where is Brown, the young, the cheery,
Smith, the pride of all his friends and half the Force?
You were at that last dread *dak*
We must cover at a walk,
Bring them back to me, O Undertaker's Horse!

With your mane unhogged and flowing,
And your curious way of going,
And that business-like black crimping of your tail,
E'en with Beauty on your back, Sir,
Pacing as a lady's hack, Sir,
What wonder when I meet you I turn pale?

It may be you wait your time, Beast,
Till I write my last bad rhyme, Beast,
Quit the sunlight, cut the rhyming, drop the glass,
Follow after with the others,
Where some dusky heathen smothers
Us with marigolds in lieu of English grass.

Or, perchance, in years to follow,
I shall watch your plump sides hollow,
See Carnifex (gone lame) become a corse,
See old age at last o'erpower you,
And the Station Pack devour you,
I shall chuckle then, O Undertaker's Horse!

But to insult, gibe, and quest, I've
Still the hideously suggestive
Trot that hammers out the grim and warning
text,
And I hear it hard behind me,
In what place soe'er I find me :—
"Sure to catch you sooner or later. Who's
the next?"

THE FALL OF JOCK GILLESPIE

THIS fell when dinner-time was done—
'Twixt the first an' the second rub—
That oor mon Jock cam' hame again
To his rooms ahint the Club.

An' syne he laughed, an' syne he sang,
An' syne we thocht him fou,
An' syne he trumped his partner's trick,
An' garred his partner rue.

Then up and spake an elder mon,
That held the spade its Ace—
"God save the lad! Whence comes the lick
That wimples on his face?"

An' Jock he sniggered, an' Jock he smiled,
An' ower the card-brim wunk :—
"I'm a' too fresh fra' the stirrup-peg,
May be that I am drunk."

"There's whusky brewed in Galashiels,
An' L. L. L. forbye;
But never liquor lit the low
That keeks fra' oot your eye.

"There's a thrid o' hair on your dress-coat breast,
Aboon the heart a wee?"
"Oh! that is fra' the lang-haired Skye
That slobbers ower me."

"Oh! lang-haired Skyes are lovin' beasts,
An' terrier dogs are fair,
But never yet was terrier born
Wi' ell-lang gowden hair!

"There's a smirch o' pouther on your breast,
Below the left lappel?"
"Oh! that is fra' my auld cigar,
Whenas the stump-end fell."

"Mon Jock, ye smoke the Trichi coarse,
For ye are short o' cash,
An' best Havanas couldna leave
Sae white an' pure an ash.

"This nicht ye stopped a story braid,
An' stopped it wi' a curse—
Last nicht ye told that tale yoursel,
An' capped it wi' a worse!

"Oh! we're no fou! Oh! we're no fou!
But plainly we can ken
Ye're fallin', fallin', fra' the band
O' cantie single men!"

An' it fell when *sirris*-shaws were sere,
An' the nichts were lang and mirk,
In braw new breeks, wi' a gowden ring,
Oor Jockie gaed to the Kirk.

ARITHMETIC ON THE FRONTIER

A GREAT and glorious thing it is
To learn, for seven years or so,
The Lord knows what of that and this,
Ere reckoned fit to face the foe—
The flying bullet down the Pass,
That whistles clear: "All flesh is grass."

Three hundred pounds per annum spent
On making brain and body meeter
For all the murderous intent
Comprised in "villanous saltpeter!"
And after—ask the Yusufzaies
What comes of all our 'ologies.

A scrimmage in a Border Station—
A canter down some dark defile—
Two thousand pounds of education
Drops to a ten-rupee *jezail*—
The Crammer's boast, the Squadron's pride,
Shot like a rabbit in a ride!

No proposition Euclid wrote,
No formulæ the text-books know,
Will turn the bullet from your coat,
Or ward the tulwar's downward blow.

Strike hard who cares—shoot straight who
can—
The odds are on the cheaper man.

One sword-knot stolen from the camp
Will pay for all the school expenses
Of any Kurrum Valley scamp
Who knows no word or moods and tenses,
But, being blessed with perfect sight,
Picks off our messmates left and right.

With home-bred hordes the hill sides teem,
The troop-ships bring us one by one,
At vast expense of time and steam,
To slay Afridis where they run.
The "captives of our bow and spear"
Are cheap—alas! as we are dear.

ONE VICEROY RESIGNS

(*Lord Dufferin to Lord Lansdowne.*)

So here's your Empire. No more wine, then?
Good.
We'll clear the Aides and *khitmatgars* away.
(You'll know that fat old fellow with the
knife—
He keeps the Name Book, talks in English too,
And almost thinks himself the Government.)
O Youth, Youth, Youth! Forgive me, you're
so young.

Forty from sixty—twenty years of work
And power to back the working. *Ay de mi!*
You want to know, you want to see, to touch,
And, by your lights, to act. It's natural.
I wonder can I help you. Let me try.
You saw—what did you see from Bombay east?
Enough to frighten any one but me?
Neat that! It frightened Me in Eighty-Four!
You shouldn't take a man from Canada
And bid him smoke in powder-magazines;
Nor with a Reputation such as—Bah!
That ghost has haunted me for twenty years,
My Reputation now full blown—Your fault—
Yours, with your stories of the strife at Home,
Who's up, who's down, who leads and who is led—
One reads so much, one hears so little here.
Well, now's your turn of exile. I go back
To Rome and leisure. All roads lead to Rome,
Or books—the refuge of the destitute.
When you . . . that brings me back to India. See!
Start clear. I couldn't. Egypt served my turn.
You'll never plumb the Oriental mind,
And if you did it isn't worth the toil.
Think of a sleek French priest in Canada;
Divide by twenty half-breeds. Multiply
By twice the Sphinx's silence. There's your East,
And you're as wise as ever. So am I.
Accept on trust and work in darkness, strike

At w nture, stumble forward, make your mark,
(It's chalk on granite), then thank God no flame
Leaps from the rock to shrivel mark and man.
I'm clear—my mark is made. Three months of drought
Had ruined much. It rained and washed away
The specks that might have gathered on my Name.
I took a country twice the size of France,
And shuttered up one doorway in the North.
I stand by those. You'll find that both will pay,
I pledged my Name on both—they're yours to-night.
Hold to them—they hold fame enough for two.
I'm old, but I shall live till Burma pays.
Men there—*not* German traders—Cr–sthw–te knows—
You'll find it in my papers. For the North
Guns always—quietly—but always guns.
You've seen your Council? Yes, they'll try to rule,
And prize their Reputations. Have you met
A grim lay-reader with a taste for coins,
And faith in Sin most men withhold from God?
He's gone to England. R–p–n knew his grip
And kicked. A Council always has its H–pes.
They look for nothing from the West but Death
Or Bath or Bournemouth. Here's their ground
They fight
Until the middle classes take them back,

One of ten millions plus a C. S. I.
Or drop in harness. Legion of the Lost?
Not altogether—earnest, narrow men,
But chiefly earnest, and they'll do your work,
And end by writing letters to the *Times*.
(Shall *I* write letters, answering H–nt–r—fawn
With R–p–n on the Yorkshire grocers? Ugh!)
They have their Reputations. Look to one—
I work with him—the smallest of them all,
White-haired, red-faced, who sat the plunging horse
Out in the garden. He's your right-hand man,
And dreams of tilting W–ls–y from the throne,
But while he dreams gives work we cannot buy;
He has his Reputation—wants the Lords
By way of Frontier Roads. Meantime, I think,
He values very much the hand that falls
Upon his shoulder at the Council table—
Hates cats and knows his business: *which is yours.*
Your business! Twice a hundred million souls.
Your business! I could tell you what I did
Some nights of Eighty-Five, at Simla, worth
A Kingdom's ransom. When a big ship drives,
God knows to what new reef the man at the wheel
Prays with the passengers. They lose their lives,
Or rescued go their way; but he's no man
To take his trick at the wheel again—that's worse

Than drowning. Well, a galled Mashobra mule
(You'll see Mashobra) passed me on the Mall,
And I was—some fool's wife had ducked and bowed
To show the others I would stop and speak.
Then the mule fell—three galls, a hand-breadth each,
Behind the withers. Mrs. Whatsisname
Leers at the mule and me by turns, thweet thoul!
"How could they make him carry such a load!"
I saw—it isn't often I dream dreams—
More than the mule that minute—smoke and flame
From Simla to the haze below. That's weak.
You're younger. You'll dream dreams before you've done.
You've youth, that's one—good workman—that means two
Fair chances in your favor. Fate's the third.
I know what I did. Do you ask me, "Preach"?
I answer by my past or else go back
To platitudes of rule—or take you thus
In confidence and say:—"You know the trick:
You've governed Canada. You know. *You* know!"
And all the while commend you to Fate's hand
(Here at the top one loses sight o' God),

Commend you, then, to something more than you—
The Other People's blunders and . . . that's all.
I'd agonize to serve you if I could.
It's incommunicable, like the cast
That drops the tackle with the gut adry.
Too much—too little—there's your salmon lost!
And so I tell you nothing—wish you luck,
And wonder—how I wonder!—for your sake
And triumph for my own. You're young, you're young,
You hold to half a hundred Shibboleths.
I'm old. I followed Power to the last,
Gave her my best, and Power followed Me.
It's worth it—on my soul I'm speaking plain,
Here by the claret glasses!—worth it all.
I gave—no matter what I gave—I win.
I *know* I win. Mine's work, good work that live!
A country twice the size of France—the North
Safeguarded. That's my record: sink the rest
And better if you can. The Rains may serve,
Rupees may rise—three pence will give you Fame—
It's rash to hope for sixpence—If they rise
Get guns, more guns, and lift the salt-tax.
Oh!
I told you what the Congress meant or thought?

I'll answer nothing. Half a year will prove
The full extent of time and thought you'll spare
To Congress. Ask a Lady Doctor *once*
How little Begums see the light—deduce
Thence how the True Reformer's child is born.
It's interesting, curious . . . and vile.
I told the Turk he was a gentleman.
I told the Russian that his Tartar veins
Bled pure Parisian ichor; and he purred.
The Congress doesn't purr. I think it swears
You're young—you'll swear too ere you've reached the end.
The end! God help you, if there be a God.
(There must be one to startle Gl–dst–ne's soul
In that new land where all the wires are cut,
And Cr–ss snores anthems on the asphodel.)
God help you! And I'd help you if I could,
But that's beyond me. Yes, your speech was crude.
Sound claret after olives—yours and mine;
But Medoc slips into vin ordinaire.
(I'll drink my first at Genoa to your health.)
Raise it to Hock. You'll never catch my style.
And, after all, the middle-classes grip
The middle-class—for Brompton talk Earl's Court.
Perhaps you're right. I'll see you in the *Times*—
A quarter-column of eye-searing print,
A leader once a quarter—then a war;
A Strand abellow through the fog: "Defeat!"

"'Orrible slaughter!" While you lie awake
And wonder. Oh, you'll wonder ere you're free!
I wonder now. The four years slide away
So fast, so fast, and leave me here alone.
R—y, C–lv–n, L—l, R–b–rts, B–ck, the rest,
Princes and Powers of Darkness, troops and trains,
(I *cannot* sleep in trains), land piled on land,
Whitewash and weariness, red rockets, dust,
White snows that mocked me, palaces—with draughts,
And W–stl–nd with the drafts he couldn't pay.
Poor W–ls–n reading his obituary
Before he died, and H–pe, the man with bones,
And A–tc–hs–n a dripping mackintosh
At council in the Rains, his grating "Sirrr"
Half drowned by H–nt–r's silky :—"Bát my lahd."
Hunterian always : M–rsh–l spinning plates
Or standing on his head; the Rent Bill's roar,
A hundred thousand speeches, much red cloth,
And Smiths thrice happy if I call them Jones,
(I can't remember half their names) or reined
My pony on the Mall to greet their wives.
More trains, more troops, more dust, and then all's done.
Four years, and I forget. If I forget
How will *they* bear me in their minds? The North
Safeguarded—nearly (R–b–rts knows the rest),
A country twice the size of France annexed.

That stays at least. The rest may pass—may pass—
Your heritage—and I can teach you nought.
"High trust," "vast honor," "interests twice as vast,"
"Due reverence to your Council"—keep to those.
I envy you the twenty years you've gained,
But not the five to follow. What's that? One?
Two!—surely not so late. Good-night. *Don't* dream.

THE BETROTHED

"You must choose between me and your cigar."

Open the old cigar-box, get me a Cuba stout,
For things are running crossways, and Maggie and I are out.

We quarreled about Havanas—we fought o'er a good cheroot,
And I know she is exacting, and she says I am a brute.

Open the old cigar-box—let me consider a space;
In the soft blue veil of the vapor, musing on Maggie's face.

Maggie is pretty to look at—Maggie's a loving lass,
But the prettiest cheeks must wrinkle, the truest of loves must pass.

There's peace in a Laranaga, there's calm in a Henry Clay,
But the best cigar in an hour is finished and thrown away—

Thrown away for another as perfect and ripe and brown—
But I could not throw away Maggie for fear o' the talk o' the town!

Maggie, my wife at fifty—gray and dour and old—
With never another Maggie to purchase for love or gold!

And the light of Days that have Been the dark of the Days that Are,
And Love's torch stinking and stale, like the butt of a dead cigar—

The butt of a dead cigar you are bound to keep in your pocket—
With never a new one to light tho' it's charred and black to the socket.

Open the old cigar-box—let me consider a while—
Here is a mild Manilla—there is a wifely smile.

Which is the better portion—bondage bought
with a ring,
Or a harem of dusky beauties fifty tied in a
string?

Counselors cunning and silent—comforters
true and tried,
And never a one of the fifty to sneer at a rival
bride.

Thought in the early morning, solace in time
of woes,
Peace in the hush of the twilight, balm ere
my eyelids close.

This will the fifty give me, asking nought in
return,
With only a *Suttee's* passion—to do their duty
and burn.

This will the fifty give me. When they are
spent and dead,
Five times other fifties shall be my servants
instead.

The furrows of far-off Java, the isles of the
Spanish Main,
When they hear my harem is empty, will send
me my brides again.

I will take no heed to their raiment, nor food
for their mouths withal,
So long as the gulls are nesting, so long as the
showers fall.

I will scent 'em with best vanilla, with tea will
I temper their hides,
And the Moor and the Mormon shall envy
who read of the tale of my brides.

For Maggie has written a letter to give me my
choice between
The wee little whimpering Love and the great
god Nick o' Teen.

And I have been servant of Love for barely
a twelvemonth clear,
But I have been Priest of Partagas a matter
of seven year;

And the gloom of my bachelor days is flecked
with the cheery light
Of stumps that I burned to Friendship and
Pleasure and Work and Fight.

And I turn my eyes to the future that Maggie
and I must prove,
But the only light on the marshes is the Will-
o'-the Wisp of Love.

Will it see me safe through my journey, or
leave me bogged in the mire?
Since a puff of tobacco can cloud it, shall I
follow the fitful fire?

Open the old cigar-box—let me consider
anew—
Old friends, and who is Maggie that I should
abandon *you?*

A million surplus Maggies are willing to bear
the yoke;
And a woman is only a woman, but a good
cigar is a Smoke.

Light me another Cuba; I hold to my first-
sworn vows,
If Maggie will have no rival, I'll have no
Maggie for spouse!

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

WHERE the sober-colored cultivator smiles
On his *byles;*
Where the cholera, the cyclone, and the crow
Come and go;
Where the merchant deals in indigo and tea,
Hides and *ghi;*
Where the Babu drops inflammatory hints
In his prints;
Stands a City—Charnock chose it—packed
away
Near a Bay—
By the sewage rendered fetid, by the sewer
Made impure,
By the Sunderbunds unwholesome, by the
swamp
Moist and damp;
And the City and the Viceroy, as we see,
Don't agree.
Once, two hundred years ago, the trader came
Meek and tame.

Where his timid foot first halted, there he stayed,
T mere trade
Grew to Em- e, and he sent his armies forth
South and North
Till the country from Peshawar to Ceylon
Was his own.
Thus the midday halt of Charnock—more's the pity!
Grew a City.
As the fungus spouts chaotic from its bed,
So it spread—
Chance-directed, chance-erected, laid and built
On the silt—
Palace, byre, hovel—poverty and pride—
Side by side;
And, above the packed and pestilential town,
Death looked down.

But the Rulers in that City by the Sea
Turned to flee—
Fled, with each returning spring-tide from its ills
To the Hills.
From the clammy fogs of morning, from the blaze
Of the days,
From the sickness of the noontide, from the heat,
Beat retreat;
For the country from Peshawar to Ceylon
Was their own.

But the Merchant risked the perils of the Plain
For his gain.

Now the resting-place of Cha[illegible]ck, 'neath the palms,
Asks an alms,
And the burden of its lamentation is,
Briefly, this:—
"Because, for certain months, we boil and stew,
So should you.
Cast the Viceroy and his Council, to perspire
In our fire!"
And for answer to the argument, in vain
We explain
That an amateur Saint Lawrence cannot fry!—
"*All* must fry!"
That the Merchant risks the perils of the Plain
For his gain.
Nor can Rulers rule a house that men grow rich in,
From its kitchen.

Let the Babu drop inflammatory hints
In his prints;
And mature—consistent soul—his plan for stealing
To Darjeeling:
Let the Merchant seek, who makes his silver pile,
England's isle;

Let the City Charnock pitched on—evil day!—
Go Her way.
Though the argosies of Asia at Her doors
Heap their stores,
Though Her enterprise and energy secure
Income sure.
Though "out-station orders punctually obeyed"
Swell Her trade—
Still, for rule, administration, and the rest,
Simla's best.

GRIFFEN'S DEBT

IMPRIMIS he was "broke." Thereafter left
His regiment, and, later, took to drink;
Then, having lost the balance of his friends,
"Went Fantee"—joined the people of the land,
Turned three parts Mussulman and one Hindu,
And lived among the Gauri villagers,
Who gave him shelter and a wife or twain,
And boasted that a thorough, full-blood *sahib*
Had come among them. Thus he spent his time,
Deeply indebted to the village *shroff*,
(Who never asked for payment) always drunk,
Unclean, abominable, out-at-heels;
Forgetting that he was an Englishman.

You know they dammed the Gauri with a dam,
And all the good contractors scamped their work,
And all the bad material at hand
Was used to dam the Gauri—which was cheap,
And, therefore, proper. Then the Gauri burst,
And several hundred thousand cubic tons
Of water dropped into the valley, *flop*,
And drowned some five and twenty villagers,
And did a lakh or two of detriment
To crops and cattle. When the flood went down
We found him dead, beneath an old dead horse,
Full six miles down the valley. So we said
He was a victim to the Demon Drink,
And moralized upon him for a week,
And then forgot him. Which was natural.

But, in the valley of the Gauri, men
Beneath the shadow of the big new dam
Relate a foolish legend of the flood,
Accounting for the little loss of life
(Only those five and twenty villagers)
In this wise: On the evening of the flood,

They heard the groaning of the rotten dam,
And voices of the Mountain Devils. Then
An incarnation of the local God,
Mounted upon a monster-neighing horse,

And flourishing a flail-like whip, came down,
Breathing ambrosia, to the villages,
And fell upon the simple villagers
With yells beyond the power of mortal throat,
And blows beyond the power of mortal hand,
And smote them with the flail-like whip, and drove
Them clamorous with terror up the hill,
And scattered, with the monster-neighing steed,
Their crazy cottages about their ears,
And generally cleared those villages.
Then came the water, and the local God,
Breathing ambrosia, flourishing his whip,
And mounted on his monster-neighing steed,
Went down the valley with the flying trees
And residue of homesteads, while they watched
Safe on the mountain-side those wondrous things,
And knew that they were much beloved of Heaven.

Wherefore, and when the dam was newly built,
They raised a temple to the local God,
And burned all manner of unsavory things
Upon his altar, and created priests,
And blew into a conch, and banged a bell,
And told the story of the Gauri flood
With circumstance and much embroidery.

So he the whiskified Objectionable,
Unclean, abominable, out-at-heels,

Became the tutelary Diety
Of all the Guari valley villages ;
And may in time become a Solar Myth.

IN SPRINGTIME

My garden blazes brightly with the rosebush and the peach,
And the *köil* sings above it, in the *siris* by the well,
From the creeper-covered trellis comes the squirrel's chattering speech,
And the blue-jay screams and flutters where the cheery *sat-bhai* dwell.
But the rose has lost its fragrance, and the *köil's* note is strange;
I am sick of endless sunshine, sick of blossom-burdened bough.
Give me back the leafless woodlands where the winds of Springtime range—
Give me back one day in England, for it's Spring in England now!
Through the pines the gusts are blooming, o'er the brown fields blowing chill,
From the furrow of the plowshare streams the fragrance of the loam,
And the hawk nests on the cliff-side and the jackdaw in the hill,
And my heart is back in England mid the sights and sounds of Home.
But the garland of the sacrifice this wealth of rose and peach is ;

Ah! *köil*, little *köil*, singing on the *sirs* bough,
In my ears the knell of exile your ceasless bell-like speech is—
Can *you* tell me aught of England or of Spring in England now?

TWO MONTHS

IN JUNE.

No hope, no change! The clouds have shut us in
And through the cloud the sullen Sun strikes down
Full on the bosom of the tortured Town.
Till Night falls heavy as remembered sin
That will not suffer sleep or thought of ease.
And, hour on hour, the dry-eyed Moon in spite
Glares through the haze and mocks with watery light
The torment of the uncomplaining trees.

Far off, the Thunder bellows her despair
To echoing Earth, thrice parched. The lightnings fly
In vain. No help the heaped-up clouds afford,
But wearier weight of burdened, burning air.
What Truce with Dawn? Look, from the aching sky,
Day stalks, a tyrant with a flaming sword!

IN SEPTEMBER.

At dawn there was a murmur in the trees,
A ripple on the tank, and in the air
Presage of coming coolness—everywhere
A voice of prophecy upon the breeze.
Up leapt the sun and smote the dust to gold,
And strove to parch anew the heedless land,
All impotently, as a King grown old
Wars for the Empire crumbling 'neath his hand.

One after one, the lotos-petals fell,
Beneath the onslaught of the rebel year
In mutiny against a furious sky;
And far-off Winter whispered: "It is well!
Hot Summer dies. Behold, your help is near,
For when men's need is sorest, then come I."

THE GALLEY-SLAVE

Oh, gallant was our galley from her carven steering-wheel
To her figurehead of silver and her beak of hammered steel;
The leg-bar chafed the ankle, and we gasped for cooler air,
But no galley on the water with our galley could compare!

Our bulkheads bulged with cotton and our masts were stepped in gold—
We ran a mighty merchandise of niggers in the hold;
The white foam spun behind us, and the black shark swam below,
As we gripped the kicking sweep-head and we made that galley go.

It was merry in the galley, for we reveled now and then—
If they wore us down like cattle, faith, we fought and loved like men!
As we snatched her through the water, so we snatched a minute's bliss,
And the mutter of the dying never spoiled the lover's kiss.

Our women and our children toiled beside us in the dark—
They died, we filed their fetters, and we heaved them to the shark—
We heaved them to the fishes, but so fast the galley sped,
We had only time to envy, for we could not mourn our dead.

Bear witness, once my comrades, what a hard-bit gang were we—
The servants of the sweep-head, but the masters of the sea!

By the hands that drove her forward as she plunged and yawed and sheered,
Woman, Man, or God or Devil, was there anything we feared?

Was it storm? Our fathers faced it, and a wilder never blew;
Earth that waited for the wreckage watched the galley struggle through.
Burning noon or choking midnight, Sickness, Sorrow, Parting, Death?
Nay, our very babes would mock you, had they time for idle breath.

But to-day I leave the galley, and another takes my place;
There's my name upon the deck-beam—let it stand a little space.
I am free—to watch my messmates beating out to open main,
Free of all that Life can offer—save to handle sweep again.

By the brand upon my shoulder, by the gall of clinging steel,
By the welt the whips have left me, by the scars that never heal;
By eyes grown old with staring through the sun-wash on the brine,
I am paid in full for service—would that service still were mine!

Yet they talk of times and seasons and of woe
the years bring forth,
Of our galley swamped and shattered in the
rollers of the North.
When the niggers break the hatches, and the
decks are gay with gore,
And a craven-hearted pilot crams her crash-
ing on the shore.

She will need no half-mast signal, minute-
gun, or rocket-flare,
When the cry for help goes seaward, she will
find her servants there.
Battered chain-gangs of the orlop, grizzled
drafts of years gone by,
To the bench that broke their manhood, they
shall lash themselves and die.

Hale and crippled, young and aged, paid, de-
serted, shipped away—
Palace, cot, and lazaretto shall make up the
tale that day,
When the skies are black above them, and
the decks ablaze beneath,
And the top-men clear the raffle with their
clasp-knives in their teeth.

It may be that Fate will give me life and leave
to row once more—
Set some strong man free for fighting as I
take awhile his oar.

But to-day I leave the galley. Shall I curse
her service then?
God be thanked—whate'er comes after, I have
live and toiled with Men!

L'ENVOI

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

THE smoke upon your Altar dies,
The flowers decay,
The Goddess of your sacrifice
Has flown away.
What profit then to sing or slay
The sacrifice from day to day?

"We know the Shrine is void," they said,
"The Goddess flown—
Yet wreaths are on the Altar laid—
The Altar-Stone
Is black with fumes of sacrifice,
Albeit She has fled our eyes.

"For, it may be, if still we sing
And tend the Shrine,
Some Deity on wandering wing
May there incline;
And, finding all in order meet,
Stay while we worship at her feet."

THE CONUNDRUM OF THE WORK-SHOPS

When the flush of a new-born sun fell first on
Eden's green and gold,
Our father Adam sat under the Tree and
scratched with a stick in the mold;
And the first rude sketch that the world had
seen was joy to his mighty heart,
Till the Devil whispered behind the leaves.
"It's pretty, but is it art?"

Wherefore he called to his wife, and fled to
fashion his work anew—
The first of his race who cared a fig for the
first, most dread review;
And he left his lore to the use of his sons—
and that was a glorious gain
When the Devil chuckled: "Is it art?" in
the ear of the branded Cain.

They builded a tower to shiver the sky and
wrench the stars apart,
Till the Devil grunted behind the bricks:
"It's striking, but is it art?"
The stone was dropped by the quarry-side,
and the idle derrick swung,
While each man talked of the aims of art, and
each in an alien tongue.

They fought and they talked in the north and
the south, they talked and then fought in
the west,
Till the water rose on the jabbering land, and
the poor Red Clay had rest—
Had rest till the dank blank-canvas dawn
when the dove was preened to start,
And the Devil bubbled below the keel: "It's
human, but is it art?"

The tale is old as the Eden Tree—as new as
the new-cut tooth—
For each man knows ere his lip-thatch grows
he is master of art and truth;
And each man hears as the twilight nears, to
the beat of his dying heart,
The Devil drum on the darkened pane:
"You did it, but was it art?"

We have learned to whittle the Eden Tree to
the shape of a surplice-peg,
We have learned to bottle our parents twain
in the yolk of an addled egg,
We know that the tail must wag the dog, as
the horse is drawn by the cart;
But the Devil whoops, as he whooped of old:
"It's clever, but is it art?"

When the flicker of London sun falls faint on
the club-room's green and gold,
The sons of Adam sit them down and scratch
with their pens in the mold—

They scratch with their pens in the mold of
their graves, and the ink and the anguish
start
When the Devil mutters behind the leaves:
"It's pretty, but is it art?"

Now, if we could win to the Eden Tree where
the four great rivers flow,
And the wreath of Eve is red on the turf as
she left it long ago,
And if we could come when the sentry slept,
and softly scurry through,
By the favor of God we might know as much
—as our father Adam knew.

THE EXPLANATION

Love and Death once ceased their strife
At the Tavern of Man's Life.
Called for wine, and threw—alas!—
Each his quiver on the grass.
When the bout was o'er they found
Mingled arrows strewed the ground.
Hastily they gathered then
Each the loves and lives of men.
Ah, the fateful dawn deceived!
Mingled arrows each one sheaved:
Death's dread armory was stored
With the shafts he most abhorred:
Love's light quiver groaned beneath
Venom-headed darts of Death.

Thus it was they wrought our woe
At the Tavern long ago.
Tell me, do our masters know,
Loosing blindly as they fly,
Old men love while young men die?

THE GIFT OF THE SEA

The dead child lay in the shroud,
And the widow watched beside;
And her mother slept, and the Channel swept
The gale in the teeth of the tide.

But the widow laughed at all.
"I have lost my man in the sea,
And the child is dead. Be still," she said,
"What more can ye do to me?"

And the widow watched the dead,
And the candle guttered low,
And she tried to sing the Passing Song
That bids the poor soul go.

And "Mary take you now," she sang,
"That lay against my heart."
And "Mary smooth your crib to-night,"
But she could not say "Depart."

Then came a cry from the sea,
But the sea-rime blinded the glass,
And "Heard ye nothing, mother?" she said;
"'Tis the child that waits to pass."

And the nodding mother sighed.
"'Tis a lambing ewe in the whin,
For why should the christened soul cry out,
That never knew of sin?"

"Oh, feet I have held in my hand,
Oh, hands at my heart to catch,
How should they know the road to go,
And how should they lift the latch?"

They laid a sheet to the door,
With the little quilt atop,
That it might not hurt from the cold or the dirt,
But the crying would not stop.

The widow lifted the latch
And strained her eyes to see,
And opened the door on the bitter shore
To let the soul go free.

There was neither glimmer nor ghost,
There was neither spirit nor spark,
And "Heard ye nothing, mother?" she said;
"'Tis crying for me in the dark."

And the nodding mother sighed,
"'Tis sorrow makes ye dull;
Have ye yet to learn the cry of the tern,
Or the wail of the wind-blown gull?"

"The terns are blown inland,
The gray gull follows the plow.
'Twas never a bird, the voice I heard,
O mother, I hear it now!"

"Lie still, dear lamb, lie still;
The child is passed from harm,
'Tis the ache in your breast that broke your rest,
And the feel of an empty arm."

She puts her mother aside,
"In Mary's name let be!
For the peace of my soul I must go," she said,
And she went to the calling sea.

In the heel of the wind-bit pier,
Where the twisted weed was piled,
So came to the life she had missed by an hour,
For she came to a little child.

She laid it into her breast,
And back to her mother she came,
But it would not feed, and it would not heed,
Though she gave it her own child's name.

And the dead child dripped on her breast,
And her own in the shroud lay stark;
And, "God forgive us, mother," she said,
"We let it die in the dark!"

EVARRA AND HIS GODS

Read here,
This is the story of Evarra—man—
Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.
Because the city gave him of her gold,
Because the caravans brought turquoises,
Because his life was sheltered by the King,
So that no man should maim him, none should steal,
Or break his rest with babble in the streets
When he was weary after toil, he made
An image of his God in gold and pearl,
With turquoise diadem and human eyes,
A wonder in the sunshine, known afar
And worshiped by the King; but, drunk with pride,
Because the city bowed to him for God,
He wrote above the shrine: "*Thus Gods are made,*
And whoso makes them otherwise shall die."
And all the city praised him. . . . Then he died.

Read here the story of Evarra—man—
Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.
Because his city had no wealth to give,
Because the caravans were spoiled afar,
Because his life was threatened by the King,
So that all men despised him in the streets,

He hacked the living rock, with sweat and tears,
And reared a God against the morning-gold,
A terror in the sunshine, seen afar,
And worshiped by the King; but, drunk with pride,
Because the city fawned to bring him back,
He carved upon the plinth: "*Thus Gods are made,*
And whoso makes them otherwise shall die."
And all the people praised him. . . . Then he died.

Read here the story of Evarra—man—
Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.
Because he lived among a simple folk,
Because his village was between the hills,
Because he smeared his cheeks with blood of ewes,
He cut an idol from a fallen pine,
Smeared blood upon its cheeks, and wedged a shell
Above its brows for eye, and gave it hair
Of trailing moss, and plaited straw for crown.
And all the village praised him for this craft,
And brought him butter, honey, milk, and curds.
Wherefore, because the shoutings drove him mad,
He scratched upon that log: "*Thus Gods are made,*

And whoso makes them otherwise shall die."
And all the people praised him. . . . Then
he died.

Read here the story of Evarra—man—
Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.
Because his God decreed one clot of blood
Should swerve a hair's-breadth from the
pulse's path,
And chafe his brain, Evarra mowed alone,
Rag-wrapped, among the cattle in the
fields,
Counting his fingers, jesting with the trees,
And mocking at the mist, until his God
Drove him to labor. Out of dung and
horns
Dropped in the mire he made a monstrous
God,
Abhorrent, shapeless, crowned with plain-
tain tufts.
And when the cattle lowed at twilight-time,
He dreamed it was the clamor of lost
crowds,
And howled among the beasts: "*Thus*
Gods are made,
And whoso makes them otherwise shall die."
Thereat the cattle bellowed. . . . Then he
died.

Yet at the last he came to Paradise,
And found his own four Gods, and that he
wrote;
And marveled, being very near to God,

What oaf on earth had made his toil God's law,
Till God said, mocking: "Mock not. These be thine."
Then cried Evarra: "I have sinned!"—"Not so.
If thou hadst written otherwise, thy Gods
Had rested in the mountain and the mine,
And I were poorer by four wondrous Gods,
And thy more wondrous law, Evarra. Thine,
Servant of shouting crowds and lowing kine."
Thereat with laughing mouth, but tear-wet eyes,
Evarra cast his Gods from Paradise.
This is the story of Evarra—man—
Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.

THE VAMPIRE

(As suggested by the Painting by Philip Burne-Jones.)

A FOOL there was and he made his prayer
(Even as you and I!)
To a rag and a bone and a hank of hair
(We called her the woman who did not care),
But the fool he called her his lady fair
(Even as you and I!)

Oh the years we waste and the tears we waste
And the work of our head and hand
Belong to the woman who did not know
(And now we know that she never could know)
And did not understand.

A fool there was and his goods he spent
(Even as you and I!)
Honor and faith and a sure intent
(And it wasn't the least what the lady meant),
But a fool must follow his natural bent
(Even as you and I!)

Oh the toil we lost and the spoil we lost
And the excellent things we planned
Belong to the woman who didn't know why
(And now we know she never knew why)
And did not understand.

The fool was stripped to his foolish hide
(Even as you and I!)
Which she might have seen when she threw him aside—
(But it isn't on record the lady tried)
So some of him lived but the most of him died—
(Even as you and I!)

And it isn't the shame and it isn't the blame
That stings like a white-hot brand.
It's coming to know that she never knew why
(Seeing at last she could never know why)
And never could understand.

OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS

A NATION spoke to a nation,
A Queen sent word to a throne:
Daughter am I in my mother's house,
But mistress in my own.
The gates are mine to open
As the gates are mine to close,
And I set my house in order,
Said the Lady of the Snows.

Neither with laughter nor weeping,
Fear or the child's amaze,
Soberly under the white man's law
My white men go their ways.
Not for the Gentile's clamor,
Insult or threat of blows,
Bow we the knee of Baal,
Said our Lady of the Snows.

My speech is clear and single,
I talk of common things,
Words of the wharf or market-place
And the ware the merchant brings.
Favor to those I favor,
But a stumbling-block for my foes,
Many there be that hate us,
Said our Lady of the Snows.

I called my chiefs to council,
In the din of a troubled year,
For the sake of a sign ye would not see
And a word ye would not hear.
This is our message and answer
This is the path we chose,
For we be also a people,
Said our Lady of the Snows.

Carry the word to my Sisters,
To the Queens of the East and South,
I have proved faith in the heritage
By more than a word of mouth.
They that are wise may follow,
Ere the world's war-trumpet blows,
But I, I am first in the battle,
Said our Lady of the Snows.

A nation spoke to a nation.
A Queen sent word to a throne:
Daughter am I in my mother's house,
But mistress in my own.
The gates are mine to open
As the gates are mine to close,
And I abide in my mother's house,
Said our Lady of the Snows.

RECESSIONAL

(*A Victorian Ode*)

GOD of our fathers, known of old—
Lord of our far-flung battle line—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies—
The Captains and the Kings depart—
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away—
On dune and headland sinks the fire—
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not thee in awe—
Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not Thee to guard.
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord!

Amen.

PREFACE

THIS is not exactly a book of downright ghost-stories as the cover makes believe. It is rather a collection of facts that never quite explained themselves. All that the collector is certain of is, that one man insisted upon dying because he believed himself to be haunted; another man either made up a wonderful lie and stuck to it, or visited a very strange place; while the third man was indubitably crucified by some person or persons unknown, and gave an extraordinary account of himself.

The peculiarity of ghost-stories is that they are never told first-hand. I have managed, with infinite trouble, to secure one exception to this rule. It is not a very good specimen, but you can credit it from beginning to end. The other three stories you must take or trust; as I did.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

THE PHANTOM 'RICKSHAW

May no ill dreams disturb my rest,
Nor Powers of Darkness me molest.
Evening Hymn.

ONE of the few advantages that India has over England is a great Knowability. After five years' service a man is directly or indirectly acquainted with the two or three hundred Civilians in his Province, all the Messes of ten or twelve Regiments and Batteries, and some fifteen hundred other people of the non-official caste. In ten years his knowledge should be doubled, and at the end of twenty he knows, or knows something about, every Englishman in the Empire, and may travel anywhere and everywhere without paying hotel-bills.

Globe-trotters who expect entertainment as a right have, even within my memory, blunted this open-heartedness, but none the less to-day, if you belong to the Inner Circle and are neither a Bear nor a Black Sheep, all houses are open to you, and our small world is very, very kind and helpful.

Rickett of Kamartha stayed with Polder of Kumaon some fifteen years ago. He meant to stay two nights, but was knocked down by rheumatic fever, and for six weeks disorganized Polder's establishment, stopped Polder's work, and nearly died in Polder's bedroom. Polder behaves as though he had been placed under eternal obligation by Rickett, and yearly sends the little Ricketts a box of presents and toys. It is the same everywhere. The men who do not take the trouble to conceal from you their opinion that you are an incompetent ass, and the women who blacken your character and misunderstand your wife's amusements, will work themselves to the bone in your behalf if you fall sick or into serious trouble.

Heatherlegh, the Doctor, kept, in addition to his regular practise, a hospital on his private account—an arrangement of loose boxes for Incurables, his friend called it—but it was really a sort of fitting-up shed for craft that had been damaged by stress of weather. The weather in India is often sultry, and since the tale of bricks is always a fixed quantity, and the only liberty allowed is permission to work overtime and get no thanks, men occasionally break down and become as mixed as the metaphors in this sentence.

Heatherlegh is the dearest doctor that ever was, and his invariable prescription to all his patients is, "lie low, go slow, and keep cool." He says that more men are killed by over-

work than the importance of this world justifices. He maintains that overwork slew Pansay, who died under his hands about three years ago. He has, of course, the right to speak authoritatively, and he laughs at my theory that there was a crack in Pansay's head and a little bit of the Dark World came through and pressed him to death. "Pansay went off the handle," says Heatherlegh, "after the stimulus of long leave at Home. He may or he may not have behaved like a blackguard to Mrs. Keith-Wessington. My notion is that the work of the Katabundi Settlement ran him off his legs, and that he took to brooding and making much of an ordinary P. & O. flirtation. He certainly was engaged to Miss Mannering, and she certainly broke off the engagement. Then he took a feverish chill and all that nonsense about ghosts developed. Overwork started his illness, kept it alight, and killed him, poor devil. Write him off to the System—one man to take the work of two and a half men."

I do not believe this. I used to sit up with Pansay sometimes when Heatherlegh was called out to patients, and I happened to be within claim. The man would make me most unhappy by describing in a low, even voice, the procession that was always passing at the bottom of his bed. He had a sick man's command of language. When he recovered I suggested that he should write out the whole affair from beginning to end, know-

ing that ink might assist him to ease his mind. When little boys have learned a new bad word they are never happy till they have chalked it up on a door. And this also is Literature.

He was in a high fever while he was writing, and the blood-and-thunder Magazine diction he adopted did not calm him. Two months afterwards he was reported fit for duty, but, in spite of the fact that he was urgently needed to help an undermanned Commission stagger through a deficit, he preferred to die; vowing at the last that he was hag-ridden. I got his manuscript before he died, and this is his version of the affair, dated 1885 :—

My doctor tells me that I need rest and change of air. It is not improbable that I shall get both ere long—rest that neither the red-coated messenger nor the midday gun can break, and change of air far beyond that which any homeward-bound steamer can give me. In the meantime I am resolved to stay where I am; and, in flat defiance of my doctor's orders, to take all the world into my confidence. You shall learn for yourselves the precise nature of my malady; and shall, too, judge for yourselves whether any man born of woman on this weary earth was ever so tormented as I.

Speaking now as a condemned criminal might speak ere the drop-bolts are drawn, my

story, wild and hideously improbable as it may appear, demands at least attention. That it will ever receive credence I utterly disbelieve. Two months ago I should have scouted as mad or drunk the man who had dared tell me the like. Two months ago I was the happiest man in India. To-day, from Peshawar to the sea, there is no one more wretched. My doctor and I are the only two who know this. His explanation is, that my brain, digestion, and eyesight are all slightly affected; giving rise to my frequent and persistent "delusions." Delusions, indeed! I call him a fool; but he attends me still with the same unwearied smile, the same bland professional manner, the same neatly-trimmed red whiskers, till I begin to suspect that I am an ungrateful, evil-tempered invalid. But you shall judge for yourselves.

Three years ago it was my fortune—my great misfortune—to sail from Gravesend to Bombay, on return from long leave, with one Agnes Keith-Wessington, wife of an officer on the Bombay side. It does not in the least concern you to know what manner of woman she was. Be content with the knowledge that, ere the voyage had ended, both she and I were desperately and unreasoningly in love with one another. Heaven knows that I can make the admission now without one particle of vanity. In matters of this sort there is always one who gives and another who accepts. From the first day of our ill-omened attach-

ment, I was conscious that Agnes's passion was a stronger, a more dominant, and—if I may use the expression—a purer sentiment than mine. Whether she recognized the fact then, I do not know. Afterwards it was bitterly plain to both of us.

Arrived at Bombay in the spring of the year, we went our respective ways, to meet no more for the next three or four months, when my leave and her love took us both to Simla. There we spent the season together; and there my fire of straw burnt itself out to a pitiful end with the closing year. I attempt no excuse. I make no apology. Mrs. Wessington had given up much for my sake, and was prepared to give up all. From my own lips, in August, 1882, she learnt that I was sick of her presence, tired of her company, and weary of the sound of her voice. Ninety-nine women out of a hundred would have wearied of me as I wearied of them; seventy-five of that number would have promptly avenged themselves by active and obtrusive flirtation with other men. Mrs. Wessington was the hundredth. On her neither my openly expressed aversion nor the cutting brutalities with which I garnished our interviews had the least effect.

"Jack, darling!" was her one eternal cuckoo cry: "I'm sure it's all a mistake—a hideous mistake; and we'll be good friends again some day. *Please* forgive me, Jack, dear."

I was the offender, and I knew it. That knowledge transformed my pity into passive endurance, and, eventually, into blind hate —the same instinct, I suppose, which prompts a man to savagely stamp on the spider he has but half killed. And with this hate in my bosom the season of 1882 came to an end.

Next year we met again at Simla—she with her monotonous face and timid attempts at reconciliation, and I with loathing of her in every fiber of my frame. Several times I could not avoid meeting her alone; and on each occasion her words were identically the same. Still the unreasoning wail that it was all a "mistake;" and still the hope of eventually "making friends." I might have seen, had I cared to look, that that hope only was keeping her alive. She grew more wan and thin month by month. You will agree with me, at least, that such conduct would have driven any one to despair. It was uncalled for; childish; unwomanly. I maintain that she was much to blame. And again, sometimes, in the black, fever-stricken night watches, I have begun to think that I might have been a little kinder to her. But that really *is* a "delusion." I could not have continued pretending to love her when I didn't; could I? It would have been unfair to us both.

Last year we met again—on the same terms as before. The same weary appeals, and the same curt answers from my lips. At least I would make her see how wholly wrong and

hopeless were her attempts at resuming the old relationship. As the season wore on, we fell apart—that is to say, she found it difficult to meet me, for I had other and more absorbing interests to attend to. When I think it over quietly in my sick-room, the season of 1884 seems a confused nightmare wherein light and shade were fantastically intermingled —my courtship of little Kitty Mannering; my hopes, doubts, and fears; our long rides together; my trembling avowal of attachment; her reply; and now and again a vision of a white face flitting by in the 'rickshaw with the black and white liveries I once watched for so earnestly; the wave of Mrs. Wessington's gloved hand; and, when she met me alone, which was but seldom, the irksome monotony of her appeal. I loved Kitty Mannering; honestly, heartily loved her, and with my love for her grew my hatred for Agnes. In August, Kitty and I were engaged. The next day I met those accursed "magpie" *jhampanies* at the back of Jakko, and, moved by some passing sentiment of pity, stopped to tell Mrs. Wessington everything. She knew it already.

"So I hear you're engaged, Jack dear." Then, without a moment's pause:—"I'm sure it's all a mistake—a hideous mistake. We shall be as good friends some day, Jack, as we ever were."

My answer might have made even a man wince. It cut the dying woman before me like the blow of a whip.

"Please forgive me, Jack; I didn't mean to make you angry; but it's true, it's true!"

And Mrs. Wessington broke down completely. I turned away and left her to finish her journey in peace, feeling, but only for a moment or two, that I had been an unutterably mean hound. I looked back, and saw that she had turned her 'rickshaw with the idea, I suppose, of overtaking me.

The scene and its surroundings were photographed on my memory. The rain-swept sky (we were at the end of the wet weather), the sodden, dingy pines, the muddy road, and the black powder-riven cliffs formed a gloomy background against which the black and white liveries of the *jhampanies,* the yellow-paneled 'rickshaw and Mrs. Wessington's down-bowed golden head stood out clearly She was holding her handkerchief in her left hand and was leaning back exhausted against the 'rickshaw cushions. I turned my horse up a by-path near the Sanjowlie Reservoir and literally ran away. Once I fancied I heard a faint call of "Jack!" This may have been imagination. I never stopped to verify it. Ten minutes later I came across Kitty on horseback; and, in the delight of a long ride with her, forgot all about the interview.

A week later Mrs. Wessington died, and the inexpressible burden of her existence was removed from my life. I went Plainsward perfectly happy. Before three months were over I had forgotten all about her, except that

at times the discovery of some of her old letters reminded me unpleasantly of our bygone relationship. By January I had disinterred what was left of our correspondence from among my scattered belongings and had burnt it. At the beginning of April of this year, 1885, I was at Simla—semi-deserted Simla—once more, and was deep in lover's talks and walks with Kitty. It was decided that we should be married at the end of June. You will understand, therefore, that, loving Kitty as I did, I am not saying too much when I pronounce myself to have been, at that time, the happiest man in India.

Fourteen delightful days passed almost before I noticed their flight. Then, aroused to the sense of what was proper among mortals circumstanced as we were, I pointed out to Kitty that an engagement ring was the outward and visible sign of her dignity as an engaged girl; and that she must forthwith come to Hamilton's to be measured for one. Up to that moment, I give you my word, we had completely forgotten so trivial a matter. To Hamilton's we accordingly went on the 15th of April, 1885. Remember that—whatever my doctor may say to the contrary—I was then in perfect health, enjoying a well-balanced mind and an *absolutely* tranquil spirit. Kitty and I entered Hamilton's shop together, and there, regardless of the order of affairs, I measured Kitty for the ring in the presence of the amused assistant. The ring was a sap-

phire with two diamonds. We then rode out down the slope that leads to the Combermere Bridge and Peliti's shop.

While my Waler was cautiously feeling his way over the loose shale, and Kitty was laughing and chattering at my side—while all Simla that is to say as much of it as had then come from the Plains, was grouped round the Reading-room and Peliti's veranda,—I was aware that some one, apparently at a vast distance, was calling me by my Christian name. It struck me that I had heard the voice before, but when and where I could not at once determine. In the short space it took to cover the road between the path from Hamilton's shop and the first plank of the Combermere Bridge I had thought over half a dozen people who might have committed such a solecism, and had eventually decided that it must have been some singing in my ears. Immediately opposite Peliti's shop my eye was arrested by the sight of four *jhampanies* in "magpie" livery, pulling a yellow-paneled, cheap, bazar 'rickshaw. In a moment my mind flew back to the previous season and Mrs. Wessington with a sense of irritation and disgust. Was it not enough that the woman was dead and done with, without her black and white servitors reappearing to spoil the day's happiness? Whoever employed them now I thought I would call upon, and ask as a personal favor to change her *jhampanies'* livery. I would hire the men myself, and, if necessary, buy

their coats from off their backs. It is impossible to say here what a flood of undesirable memories their presence evoked.

"Kitty," I cried, "there are poor Mrs. Wessington's *jhampanies* turned up again! I wonder who has them now?"

Kitty had known Mrs. Wessington slightly last season, and had always been interested in the sickly woman.

"What? Where?" she asked. "I can't see them anywhere."

Even as she spoke, her horse, swerving from a laden mule, threw himself directly in front of the advancing 'rickshaw. I had scarcely time to utter a word of warning, when, to my unutterable horror, horse and rider passed *through* men and carriage as if they had been thin air.

"What's the matter?" cried Kitty; "what made you call out so foolishly, Jack? If I *am* engaged I don't want all creation to know about it. There was lots of space between the mule and the veranda; and, if you think I can't ride——There!"

Whereupon wilful Kitty set off, her dainty little head in the air, at a hand-gallop in the direction of the Band-stand; fully expecting, as she herself afterwards told me, that I should follow her. What was the matter? Nothing indeed. Either that I was mad or drunk, or that Simla was haunted with devils. I reined in my impatient cob, and turned round. The 'rickshaw had turned too, and now stood im-

mediately facing me, near the left railing of the Combermere Bridge.

"Jack! Jack, darling!" There was no mistake about the words this time: they rang through my brain as if they had been shouted in my ear. "It's some hideous mistake, I'm sure. *Please* forgive me, Jack, and let's be friends again."

The 'rickshaw-hood had fallen back, and inside, as I hope and pray daily for the death I dread by night, sat Mrs. Keith-Wessington, handkerchief in hand, and golden head bowed on her breast.

How long I stared motionless I do not know. Finally, I was aroused by my syce taking the Waler's bridle and asking whether I was ill. From the horrible to the commonplace is but a step. I tumbled off my horse and dashed, half fainting, into Peliti's for a glass of cherry-brandy. There two or three couples were gathered round the coffee-tables discussing the gossip of the day. Their trivialities were more comforting to me just then than the consolations of religion could have been. I plunged into the midst of the conversation at once; chatted, laughed, and jested with a face (when I caught a glimpse of it in a mirror) as white and drawn as that of a corpse. Three or four men noticed my condition; and, evidently setting it down to the results of over-many pegs, charitably endeavored to draw me apart from the rest of the loungers. But I refused to be led away.

I wanted the company of my kind—as a child rushes into the midst of the dinner-party after a fright in the dark. I must have talked for about ten minutes or so, though it seemed an eternity to me, when I heard Kitty's clear voice outside inquiring for me. In another minute she had entered the shop, prepared to roundly upbraid me for failing so signally in my duties. Something in my face stopped her.

"Why, Jack," she cried, "what *have* you been doing? What *has* happened? Are you ill?" Thus driven into a direct lie, I said that the sun had been a little too much for me. It was close upon five o'clock of a cloudy April afternoon, and the sun had been hidden all day. I saw my mistake as soon as the words were out of my mouth; attempted to recover it; blundered hopelessly and followed Kitty in a regal rage, out of doors, amid the smiles of my acquaintances. I made some excuse (I have forgotten what) on the score of my feeling faint; and cantered away to my hotel, leaving Kitty to finish the ride by herself.

In my room I sat down and tried calmly to reason out the matter. Here was I, Theobald Jack Pansay, a well-educated Bengal Civilian in the year of grace 1885, presumably sane, certainly healthy, driven in terror from my sweetheart's side by the apparition of a woman who had been dead and buried eight months ago. These were facts that I could

not blink. Nothing was further from my thought than any memory of Mrs. Wessington when Kitty and I left Hamilton's shop. Nothing was more utterly commonplace than the stretch of wall opposite Peliti's. It was broad daylight. The road was full of people; and yet here, look you, in defiance of every law of probability, in direct outrage of Nature's ordinance, there had appeared to me a face from the grave.

Kitty's Arab had gone *through* the 'rickshaw: so that my first hope that some woman marvelously like Mrs. Wessington had hired the carriage and the coolies with their old livery was lost. Again and again I went round this treadmill of thought; and again and again gave up baffled and in despair. The voice was as inexplicable as the apparition. I had originally some wild notion of confiding it all to Kitty; of begging her to marry me at once; and in her arms defying the ghostly occupant of the 'rickshaw. "After all," I argued, "the presence of the 'rickshaw is in itself enough to prove the existence of a spectral illusion. One may see ghosts of men and women, but surely never of coolies and carriages. The whole thing is absurd. Fancy the ghost of a hillman!"

Next morning I sent a penitent note to Kitty, imploring her to overlook my strange conduct of the previous afternoon. My Divinity was still very wroth, and a personal apology was necessary. I explained, with a

fluency born of night-long pondering over a falsehood, that I had been attacked with a sudden palpitation of the heart—the result of indigestion. This eminently practical solution had its effect; and Kitty and I rode out that afternoon with the shadow of my first lie dividing us.

Nothing would please her save a canter round Jakko. With my nerves still unstrung from the previous night. I feebly protested against the notion, suggesting Observatory Hill, Jutogh, the Boileaugunge road—anything rather than the Jakko round. Kitty was angry and a little hurt: so I yielded from fear of provoking further misunderstanding, and we set out together towards Chota Simla. We walked a greater part of the way, and according to our custom, cantered from a mile or so below the convent to a stretch of level road by the Sanjowlie Reservoir. The wretched horses appeared to fly, and my heart beat quicker and quicker as we neared the crest of the ascent. My mind had been full of Mrs. Wessington all the afternoon; and every inch of the Jakko road bore witness to our old-time walks and talks. The bowlders were full of it; the pines sang it aloud overhead; the rain-fed torrents giggled and chuckled unseen over the shameful story; and the wind in my ears chanted the iniquity aloud.

As a fitting climax, in the middle of the level men call the Ladies' Mile the Horror was awaiting me. No other 'rickshaw was in sight

—only the four black and white *jhampanies*, the yellow-paneled carriage, and the golden head of the woman within—all apparently just as I had left them eight months and one fortnight ago! For an instant I fancied that Kitty *must* see what I saw—we were so marvelously sympathetic in all things. Her next words undeceived me—"Not a soul in sight! Come along, Jack, and I'll race you to the Reservoir buildings!" Her wiry little Arab was off like a bird, my Waler following close behind, and in this order we dashed under the cliffs. Half a minute brought us within fifty yards of the 'rickshaw. I pulled my Waler and fell back a little. The 'rickshaw was directly in the middle of the road; and once more the Arab passed through it, my horse following. "Jack! Jack dear! *Please* forgive me," rang with a wail in my ears, and, after an interval: —"It's all a mistake, a hideous mistake!"

I spurred my horse like a man possessed. When I turned my head at the Reservoir works, the black and white liveries were still waiting—patiently waiting—under the gray hillside, and the wind brought me a mocking echo of the words I had just heard. Kitty bantered me a good deal on my silence throughout the remainder of the ride. I had been talking up till then wildly and at random. To save my life I could not speak afterwards naturally, and from Sanjowlie to the Church wisely held my tongue.

I was to dine with the Mannerings that

night, and had barely time to canter home to dress. On the road to Elysium Hill I overheard two men talking together in the dusk. —"It's a curious thing," said one, "how completely all trace of it disappeared. You know my wife was insanely fond of the woman (never could see anything in her myself), and wanted me to pick up her old 'rickshaw and coolies if they were to be got for love or money. Morbid sort of fancy I call it; but I've got to do what the *Memsahib* tells me. Would you believe that the man she hired it from tells me that all four of the men—they were brothers—died of cholera on the way to Hardwar, poor devils; and the 'rickshaw has been broken up by the man himself. 'Told me he never used a dead *Memsahib's* 'rickshaw. 'Spoilt his luck. Queer notion, wasn't it? Fancy poor little Mrs. Wessington spoiling any one's luck except her own!" I laughed aloud at this point; and my laugh jarred on me as I uttered it. So there *were* ghosts of 'rickshaws after all, and ghostly employments in the other world! How much did Mrs. Wessington give her men? What were their hours? Where did they go?

And for visible answer to my last question I saw the infernal Thing blocking my path in the twilight. The dead travel fast, and by short cuts unknown to ordinary coolies. I laughed aloud a second time, and checked my laughter suddenly, for I was afraid I was going mad. Mad to a certain extent I must

have been, for I recollect that I reined in my horse at the head of the 'rickshaw, and politely wished Mrs. Wessington "Good evening." Her answer was one I knew only too well. I listened to the end; and replied that I had heard it all before, but should be delighted if she had anything further to say. Some malignant devil stronger than I must have entered into me that evening, for I have a dim recollection of talking the commonplaces of the day for five minutes to the Thing in front of me.

"Mad as a hatter, poor devil—or drunk. Max, try and get him to come home."

Surely *that* was not Mrs. Wessington's voice! The two men had overheard me speaking to the empty air, and had returned to look after me. They were very kind and considerate, and from their words evidently gathered that I was extremely drunk. I thanked them confusedly and cantered away to my hotel, there changed, and arrived at the Mannerings' ten minutes late. I pleaded the darkness of the night as an excuse; was rebuked by Kitty for my unlover-like tardiness; and sat down.

The conversation had already became general; and under cover of it, I was addressing some tender small talk to my sweetheart, when I was aware that at the further end of the table a short red-whiskered man was describing, with much broidery, his encounter with a mad unknown that evening.

A few sentences convinced me that he was

repeating the incident of half an hour ago. In the middle of the story he looked round for applause, as professional story-tellers do, caught my eye, and straightway collapsed. There was a moment's awkward silence, and the red-whiskered man muttered something to the effect that he had "forgotten the rest," thereby sacrificing a reputation as a good story-teller which he had built up for six seasons past. I blessed him from the bottom of my heart, and—went on with my fish.

In the fulness of time that dinner came to an end; and with genuine regret I tore myself away from Kitty—as certain as I was of my own existence that It would be waiting for me outside the door. The red-whiskered man, who had been introduced to me as Dr. Heatherlegh of Simla, volunteered to bear me company as far as our roads lay together. I accepted his offer with gratitude.

My instinct had not deceived me. It lay in readiness in the Mall, and, in what seemed devilish mockery of our ways, with a lighted head-lamp. The red-whiskered man went to the point at once, in a manner that showed he had been thinking over it all dinner time.

"I say, Pansay, what the deuce was the matter with you this evening on the Elysium road?" The suddenness of the question wrenched an answer from me before I was aware.

"That!" said I, pointing to It.

"*That*, may be either D. T. or Eyes for

aught I know. Now you don't liquor. I saw as much at dinner, so it can't be *D. T.* There's nothing whatever where you're pointing, though you're sweating and trembling with fright like a scared pony. Therefore, I conclude that it's Eyes. And I ought to understand all about them. Come along home with me. I'm on the Blessington lower road."

To my intense delight the 'rickshaw, instead of waiting for us, kept about twenty yards ahead—and this, too, whether we walked, trotted, or cantered. In the course of that long night ride I had told my companion almost as much as I have told you here.

"Well, you've spoilt one of the best tales I've ever laid tongue to," said he, "but I'll forgive you for the sake of what you've gone through. Now come home and do what I tell you; and when I've cured you, young man, let this be a lesson to you to steer clear of women and indigestible food till the day of your death."

The 'rickshaw kept steady in front; and my red-whiskered friend seemed to derive great pleasure from my account of its exact whereabouts.

"Eyes, Pansay—all Eyes, Brain, and Stomach. And the greatest of these three is Stomach. You've too much conceited Brain, too little Stomach, and thoroughly unhealthy Eyes. Get your Stomach straight and the rest follows. And all that's French for a

liver pill. I'll take sole medical charge of you from this hour! for you're too interesting a phenomenon to be passed over."

By this time we were deep in the shadow of the Blessington lower road and the 'rickshaw came to a dead stop under a pine-clad, overhanging shale cliff. Instinctively I halted too, giving my reason, Heatherlegh rapped out an oath.

"Now, if you think I'm going to spend a cold night on the hillside for the sake of a Stomach *cum*-Brain-*cum*-Eye illusion . . . Lord, ha' mercy! What's that?"

There was a muffled report, a blinding smother of dust just in front of us, a crack, the noise of rent boughs, and about ten yards of the cliff-side—pines, undergrowth, and all—slid down into the road below, completely blocking it up. The uprooted trees swayed and tottered for a moment like drunken giants in the gloom, and then fell prone among their fellows with a thunderous crash. Our two horses stood motionless and sweating with fear. As soon as the rattle of falling earth and stone had subsided, my companion muttered:—"Man if we'd gone forward we should have been ten feet deep in our graves by now. 'There are more things in heaven and earth' . . . Come home, Pansay, and thank God. I want a peg badly."

We retraced our way over the Church Ridge, and I arrived at Dr. Heatherlegh's house shortly after midnight.

His attempts towards my cure commenced almost immediately, and for a week I never left his side. Many a time in the course of that week did I bless the good-fortune which had thrown me in contact with Simla's best and kindest doctor. Day by day my spirits grew lighter and more equable. Day by day, too, I became more and more inclined to fall in with Heatherlegh's "spectral illusion" theory, implicating eyes, brain, and stomach. I wrote to Kitty, telling her that a slight sprain caused by a fall from my horse kept me indoors for a few days; and that I should be recovered before she had time to regret my absence.

Heatherlegh's treatment was simple to a degree. It consisted of liver pills, cold-water baths, and strong exercise, taken in the dusk or at early dawn—for, as he sagely observed:—"A man with a sprained ankle doesn't walk a dozen miles a day, and your young woman might be wondering if she saw you."

At the end of the week, after much examination of pupil and pulse, and strict injunctions as to diet and pedestrianism, Heatherlegh dismissed me as brusquely as he had taken charge of me. Here is his parting benediction:—"Man, I certify to your mental cure, and that's as much as to say I've cured most of your bodily ailments. Now, get your traps out of this as soon as you can; and be off to make love to Miss Kitty."

I was endeavoring to express my thanks for his kindness. He cut me short.

"Don't think I did this because I like you. I gather that you've behaved like a blackguard all through. But, all the same, you're a phenomenon, and as queer a phenomenon as you are a blackguard. No!"—checking me a second time—"not a rupee, please. Go out and see if you can find the eyes-brain-and-stomach business again. I'll give you a lakh for each time you see it."

Half an hour later I was in the Mannerings' drawing-room with Kitty—drunk, with the intoxication of present happiness and the foreknowledge that I should never more be troubled with Its hideous presence. Strong in the sense of my new-found security, I proposed a ride at once; and, by preference, a canter round Jakko.

Never had I felt so well, so overladen with vitality and mere animal spirits, as I did on the afternoon of the 30th of April. Kitty was delighted at the change in my appearance, and complimented me on it in her delightfully frank and outspoken manner. We left the Mannerings' house together, laughing and talking, and cantered along the Chota Simla road as of old.

I was in haste to reach the Sanjowlie Reservoir and there make my assurance doubly sure. The horses did their best, but seemed all too slow to my impatient mind. Kitty was astonished at my boisterousness. "Why, Jack!"

she cried at last, "you are behaving like a child. What are you doing?"

We were just below the Convent, and from sheer wantonness I was making my Waler plunge and curvet across the road as I tickled it with the loop of my riding-whip.

"Doing?" I answered: "nothing, dear. That's just it. If you'd been doing nothing for a week except lie up, you'd be as riotous as I.

"'Singing and murmuring in your feastful mirth,
Joying to feel yourself alive;
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible Earth,
Lord of the senses five.'"

My quotation was hardly out of my lips before we had rounded the corner above the Convent; and a few yards further on could see across to Sanjowlie. In the center of the level road stood the black and white liveries, the yellow-paneled 'rickshaw, and Mrs. Keith-Wessington. I pulled up, looked, rubbed my eyes, and, I believe, must have said something. The next thing I knew was that I was lying face downward on the road, with Kitty kneeling above me in tears.

"Has It gone, child?" I gasped. Kitty only wept more bitterly.

"Has what gone, Jack dear? What does it all mean? There must be a mistake somewhere, Jack. A hideous mistake." Her last words brought me to my feet—mad—raving for the time being.

"Yes, there *is* a mistake somewhere," I re-

peated, "a hideous mistake. Come and look at It"

I have an indistinct idea that I dragged Kitty by the wrist along the road up to where It stood, and implored her for pity's sake to speak to It; to tell It that we were betrothed; that neither Death nor Hell could break the tie between us; and Kitty only knows how much more to the same effect. Now and again I appealed passionately to the Terror in the 'rickshaw to bear witness to all I had said, and to release me from a torture that was killing me. As I talked I suppose I must have told Kitty of my old relations with Mrs. Wessington, for I saw her listen intently with white face and blazing eyes.

"Thank you, Mr. Pansay," she said, "that's *quite* enough. *Syce ghora lão.*"

The syces, impassive as Orientals always are, had come up with the recaptured horses; and as Kitty sprang into her saddle I caught hold of the bridle, entreating her to hear me out and forgive. My answer was the cut of her riding-whip across my face from mouth to eye, and a word or two of farewell that even now I cannot write down. So I judged, and judged rightly, that Kitty knew all; and I staggered back to the side of the 'rickshaw. My face was cut and bleeding, and the blow of the riding-whip had raised a livid blue weal on it. I had no self-respect. Just then, Heatherlegh, who must have been following Kitty and me at a distance, cantered up.

"Doctor," I said, pointing to my face, "here's Miss Mannering's signature to my order of dismissal and . . . I'll thank you for that lakh as soon as convenient."

Heatherlegh's face, even in my abject misery, moved me to laughter.

"I'll stake my professional reputation"—he began.

"Don't be a fool," I whispered. "I've lost my life's happiness and you'd better take me home."

"As I spoke the 'rickshaw was gone. Then I lost all knowledge of what was passing. The crest of Jakko seemed to heave and roll like the crest of a cloud and fall in upon me.

Seven days later (on the 7th of May, that is to say) I was aware that I was lying in Heatherlegh's room as weak as a little child. Heatherlegh was watching me intently from behind the papers on his writing-table. His first words were not encouraging; but I was too far spent to be much moved by them.

"Here's Miss Kitty has sent back your letters. You correspond a good deal, you young people. Here's a packet that looks like a ring, and a cheerful sort of a note from Mannering Papa, which I've taken the liberty of reading and burning. The old gentleman's not pleased with you."

"And Kitty?" I asked dully.

"Rather more drawn than her father, from what she says. By the same token you must

have been letting out any number of queer reminiscences just before I met you. 'Says that a man who would have behaved to a woman as you did to Mrs. Wessington ought to kill himself out of sheer pity for his kind. She is a hot-headed little virago, your mash. 'Will have it too that you were suffering from *D. T.* when that row on the Jakko road turned up. 'Says she'll die before she ever speaks to you again."

I groaned and turned over on the other side.

"Now you've got your choice, my friend. This engagement has to be broken off; and the Mannerings don't want to be too hard on you. Was it broken through *D. T.* or epileptic fits? Sorry I can't offer you a better exchange unless you'd prefer hereditary insanity. Say the word and I'll tell 'em it's fits. All Simla knows about that scene on the Ladies' Mile. Come! I'll give you five minutes to think over it."

During those five minutes I believe that I explored thoroughly the lowest circles of the Inferno which it is permitted man to tread on earth. And at the same time I myself was watching myself faltering through the dark labyrinths of doubt, misery, and utter despair. I wondered, as Heatherlegh in his chair might have wondered, which dreadful alternative I should adopt. Presently I heard myself answering in a voice that I hardly recognized,—

"They're confoundedly particular about morality in these parts. Give 'em fits, Heath-

erlegh, and my love. Now let me sleep a bit longer."

Then my two selves joined, and it was only I (half crazed, devil-driven I) that tossed in my bed, tracing step by step the history of the past month.

"But I am in Simla," I kept repeating to myself. "I, Jack Pansay, am in Simla, and there are no ghosts here. It's unreasonable of that woman to pretend there are. Why couldn't Agnes have left me alone? I never did her any harm. It might just as well have been me as Agnes. Only I'd never have come back on purpose to kill *her*. Why can't I be left alone—left alone and happy?"

It was high noon when I first awoke: and the sun was low in the sky before I slept—slept as the tortured criminal sleeps on his rack, too worn to feel further pain.

Next day I could not leave my bed. Heatherlegh told me in the morning that he had received an answer from Mr. Mannering, and that, thanks to his (Heatherlegh's) friendly offices, the story of my affliction had traveled through the length and breadth of Simla, where I was on all sides much pitied.

"And that's rather more than you deserve," he concluded pleasantly, "though the Lord knows you've been going through a pretty severe mill. Never mind; we'll cure you yet, you perverse phenomenon."

I declined firmly to be cured. "You've been much too good to me already, old man,"

said I; "but I don't think I need trouble you further."

In my heart I knew that nothing Heatherlegh could do would lighten the burden that had been laid upon me.

With that knowledge came also a sense of hopeless, impotent rebellion against the unreasonableness of it all. There were scores of men no better than I whose punishments had at least been reserved for another world; and I felt that it was bitterly, cruelly unfair that I alone should have been singled out for so hideous a fate. This mood would in time give place to another where it seemed that the 'rickshaw and I were the only realities in a world of shadows; that Kitty was a ghost; that Mannering, Heatherlegh, and all the other men and women I knew were all ghosts; and the great, gray hills themselves but vain shadows devised to torture me. From mood to mood I tossed backwards and forwards for seven weary days; my body growing daily stronger and stronger, until the bedroom looking-glass told me that I had returned to every day life, and was as other men once more. Curiously enough my face showed no signs of the struggle I had gone through. It was pale indeed, but as expressionless and commonplace as ever. I had expected some permanent alteration—visible evidence of the disease that was eating me away. I found nothing.

On the 15th of May I left Heatherlegh's

house at eleven o'clock in the morning; and the instinct of the bachelor drove me to the Club. There I found that every man knew my story as told by Heatherlegh, and was, in clumsy fashion, abnormally kind and attentive. Nevertheless I recognized that for the rest of my natural life I should be among but not of my fellows; and I envied very bitterly indeed the laughing coolies on the Mall below. I lunched at the Club, and at four o'clock wandered aimlessly down the Mall in the vague hope of meeting Kitty. Close to the Band-stand the black and white liveries joined me; and I heard Mrs. Wessington's old appeal at my side. I had been expecting this ever since I came out; and was only surprised at her delay. The phantom 'rickshaw and I went side by side along the Chota Simla road in silence. Close to the bazar, Kitty and a man on horseback overtook and passed us. For any sign she gave I might have been a dog in the road. She did not even pay me the compliment of quickening her pace; though the rainy afternoon had served for an excuse.

So Kitty and her companion, and I and my ghostly Light-o'-Love, crept round Jakko in couples. The road was streaming with water; the pines dripped like roof-pipes on the rocks below, and the air was full of fine, driving rain. Two or three times I found myself saying to myself almost aloud: — "I'm Jack Pansay on leave at Simla—*at Simla!* Everyday, ordinary Simla. I mustn't forget that—

I mustn't forget that." Then I would try to recollect some of the gossip I had heard at the Club; the prices of So-and-So's horses—anything, in fact, that related to the work-a-day Anglo-Indian world I knew so well. I even repeated the multiplication-table rapidly to myself, to make quite sure that I was not taking leave of my senses. It gave me much comfort; and must have prevented my hearing Mrs. Wessington for a time.

Once more I wearily climbed the Convent slope and entered the level road. Here Kitty and the man started off at a canter, and I was left alone with Mrs. Wessington. "Agnes," said I, "will you put back your hood and tell me what it all means?" The hood dropped noiselessly, and I was face to face with my dead and buried mistress. She was wearing the dress in which I had last seen her alive; carried the same tiny handkerchief in her right hand; and the same card-case in her left. (A woman eight months dead with a card-case?) I had to pin myself down to the multiplication-table, and to set both hands on the stone parapet of the road, to assure myself that that at least was real.

"Agnes," I repeated, "for pity's sake tell me what it all means." Mrs. Wessington leant forward with that odd, quick turn of the head I used to know so well, and spoke.

If my story had not already so madly overleaped the bounds of all human belief I should apologize to you now. As I know that no

one—no, not even Kitty, for whom it is written as some sort of justification of my conduct—will believe me, I will go on. Mrs. Wessington spoke and I walked with her from the Sanjowlie road to the turning below the Commander-in-chief's house as I might walk by the side of any living woman's 'rickshaw, deep in conversation. The second and most tormenting of my moods of sickness had suddenly laid hold upon me, and like the Prince in Tennyson's poem, "I seemed to move amid a world of ghosts." There had been a garden-party at the Commander-in-chief's, and we two joined the crowd of homeward-bound folk. As I saw them then it seemed that *they* were the shadows—impalpable fantastic shadows—that divided for Mrs. Wessington's 'rickshaw to pass through. What we said during the course of that weird interview I cannot—indeed, I dare not—tell. Heatherlegh's comment would have been a short laugh and a remark that I had been "mashing a brain-eye-and-stomach chimera." It was a ghastly and yet in some indefinable way a marvelously dear experience. Could it be possible, I wondered, that I was in this life to woo a second time the woman I had killed by my own neglect and cruelty?

I met Kitty on the homeward road—a shadow among shadows.

If I were to describe all the incidents of the next fortnight in their order, my story would never come to an end; and your patience

would be exhausted. Morning after morning and evening after evening the ghostly 'rickshaw and I used to wander through Simla together. Wherever I went there the four black and white liveries followed me and bore me company to and from my hotel. At the Theater I found them amid the crowd of yelling *jhampanies;* outside the Club veranda, after a long evening of whist; at the Birthday Ball, waiting patiently for my reappearance; and in broad daylight when I went calling. Save that it cast no shadow, the 'rickshaw was in every respect as real to look upon as one of wood and iron. More than once, indeed, I have had to check myself from warning some hard-riding friend against cantering over it. More than once I have walked down the Mall deep in conversation with Mrs. Wessington to the unspeakable amazement of the passers-by.

Before I had been out and about a week I learned that the "fit" theory had been discarded in favor of insanity. However, I made no change in my mode of life, I called, rode, and dined out as freely as ever. I had a passion for the society of my kind which I had never felt before; I hungered to be among the realities of life; and at the same time I felt vaguely unhappy when I had been separated too long from my ghostly companion. It would be almost impossible to describe my varying moods from the 15th of May up to to-day.

The presence of the 'rickshaw filled me by turns with horror, blind fear, a dim sort of pleasure, and utter despair. I dared not leave Simla; and I knew that my stay there was killing me. I knew, moreover, that it was my destiny to die slowly and a little every day. My only anxiety was to get the penance over as quietly as might be. Alternately I hungered for a sight of Kitty and watched her outrageous flirtations with my successor—to speak more accurately, my successors—with amused interest. She was as much out of my life as I was out of hers. By day I wandered with Mrs. Wessington almost content. By night I implored Heaven to let me return to the world as I used to know it. Above all these varying moods lay the sensation of dull, numbing wonder that the Seen and the Unseen should mingle so strangely on this earth to hound one poor soul to its grave.

. . . . . .

August 27.—Heatherlegh has been indefatigable in his attendance on me; and only yesterday told me that I ought to send in an application for sick leave. An application to escape the company of a phantom! A request that the Government would graciously permit me to get rid of five ghosts and an airy 'rickshaw by going to England! Heatherlegh's proposition moved me almost to hysterical laughter. I told him that I should await the end quietly at Simla; and I am sure that the

end is not far off. Believe me that I dread its advent more than any word can say; and I torture myself nightly with a thousand speculations as to the manner of my death.

Shall I die in my bed decently and as an English gentleman should die; or, in one last walk on the Mall, will my soul be wrenched from me to take its place forever and ever by the side of that ghastly phantasm? Shall I return to my old lost allegiance in the next world, or shall I meet Agnes, loathing her and bound to her side through all eternity? Shall we two hover over the scene of our lives till the end of Time? As the day of my death draws nearer, the intense horror that all living flesh feels towards escaped spirits from beyond the grave grows more and more powerful. It is an awful thing to go down quick among the dead with scarcely one-half of your life completed. It is a thousand times more awful to wait as I do in your midst, for I know not what unimaginable terror. Pity me, at least on the score of my "delusion," for I know you will never believe what I have written here. Yet as surely as ever a man was done to death by the Powers of Darkness I am that man.

In justice, too, pity her. For as surely as ever woman was killed by man, I killed Mrs. Wessington. And the last portion of my punishment is even now upon me.

MY OWN TRUE GHOST STORY.

As I came through the Desert thus it was—
As I came through the Desert.
The City of Dreadful Night.

SOMEWHERE in the Other World, where there are books and pictures and plays and shop-windows to look at, and thousands of men who spend their lives in building up all four, lives a gentleman who writes real stories about the real insides of people; and his name is Mr. Walter Besant. But he will insist upon treating his ghosts—he has published half a workshopful of them—with levity. He makes his ghost-seers talk familiarly, and, in some cases, flirt outrageously, with the phantoms. You may treat anything, from a Viceroy to a Vernacular Paper, with levity; but you must behave reverently towards a ghost, and particularly an Indian one.

There are, in this land, ghosts who take the form of fat, cold, pobby corpses, and hide in trees near the roadside till a traveler passes. Then they drop upon his neck and remain. There are also terrible ghosts of women who have died in child-bed. These wander along the pathways at dusk, or hide in the crops near a village, and call seductively. But to

answer their call is death in this world and the next. Their feet are turned backwards that all sober men may recognize them. There are ghosts of little children who have been thrown into wells. These haunt well-curbs and the fringes of jungles, and wail under the stars, or catch women by the wrist and beg to be taken up and carried. These and the corpse-ghosts, however, are only vernacular articles and do not attack Sahibs. No native ghost has yet been authentically reported to have frightened an Englishman; but many English ghosts have scared the life out of both white and black.

Nearly every other Station owns a ghost. There are said to be two at Simla, not counting the woman who blows the bellows at Syree dâk-bungalow on the Old Road; Mussoorie has a house haunted of a very lively Thing; a White Lady is supposed to do night-watchman round a house in Lahore; Dalhousie says that one of her houses "repeats" on autumn evenings all the incidents of a horrible horse-and-precipice accident; Murree has a merry ghost, and, now that she has been swept by cholera, will have room for a sorrowful one; there are Officers Quarters, in Mian Mir whose doors open without reason, and whose furniture is guaranteed to creak, not with the heat of June but with the weight of Invisibles who come to lounge in the chairs; Peshawar possesses houses that none will willingly rent; and there is something—not fever—wrong with a big bungalow in Allahabad. The older Provinces

simply bristle with haunted houses, and march phantom armies along their main thoroughfares.

Some of the dâk-bungalows on the Grand Trunk Road have handy little cemeteries in their compound—witnesses to the " changes and chances of this mortal life " in the days when men drove from Calcutta to the North-west. These bungalows are objectionable places to put up in. They are generally very old, always dirty, while the *khansamah* is as ancient as the bungalow. He either chatters senilely, or falls into the long trances of age. In both moods he is useless. If you get angry with him, he refers to some Sahib dead and buried these thirty years, and says that when he was in that Sahib's service not a *khansamah* in the Province could touch him. Then he jabbers and mows and trembles and fidgets among the dishes and you repent of your irritation.

In these dâk-bungalows, ghosts are most likely to be found, and when found, they should be made a note of. Not long ago it was my business to live in dâk-bungalows. I never inhabited the same house for three nights running, and grew to be learned in the breed. I lived in Government-built ones with red brick walls and rail ceilings, an inventory of the furniture posted in every room, and an excited snake at the threshold to give welcome. I lived in "converted" ones—old houses officiating as dâk-bungalows—where

nothing was in its proper place and there wasn't even a fowl for dinner. I lived in second-hand palaces where the wind blew through open-work marble tracery just as uncomfortably as through a broken pane. I lived in dâk-bungalows where the last entry in the visitors' book was fifteen months old, and where they slashed off the curry-kid's head with a sword. It was my good luck to meet all sorts of men, from sober traveling missionaries and deserters flying from British Regiments, to drunken loafers who threw whisky bottles at all who passed; and my still greater good fortune just to escape a maternity case. Seeing that a fair proportion of the tragedy of our lives out here acted itself in dâk-bungalows, I wondered that I had met no ghosts. A ghost that would voluntarily hang about a dâk-bungalow would be mad of course; but so many men have died mad in dâk-bungalows that there must be a fair percentage of lunatic ghosts.

In due time I found my ghost, or ghosts rather, for there were two of them. Up till that hour I had sympathized with Mr. Besant's method of handling them, as shown in "*The Strange Case of Mr. Lucraft and other Stories.*" I am now in the opposition.

We will call the bungalow Katmal dâk-bungalow. But *that* was the smallest part of the horror. A man with a sensitive hide has no right to sleep in dâk-bungalows. He should marry. Katmal dâk-bungalow was old and rotten and unrepaired. The floor

was of worn brick, the walls were filthy, and the windows were nearly black with grime. It stood on a by-path largely used by native Sub-Deputy Assistants of all kinds, from Finance to Forests; but real Sahibs were rare. The *khansamah*, who was nearly bent double with old age, said so.

When I arrived, there was a fitful, undecided rain on the face of the land, accompanied by a restless wind, and every gust made a noise like the rattling of dry bones in the stiff toddy-palms outside. The *khansamah* completely lost his head on my arrival. He had served a Sahib once. Did I know that Sahib? He gave me the name of a well-known man who has been buried for more than a quarter of a century, and showed me an ancient daguerreotype of that man in his prehistoric youth. I had seen a steel engraving of him at the head of a double volume of Memoirs a month before, and I felt ancient beyond telling.

The day shut in and the *khansamah* went to get me food. He did not go through the pretense of calling it "*khana*"—man's victuals. He said "*ratub*," and that means, among other things, "grub"—dog's rations. There was no insult in his choice of the term. He had forgotten the other word, I suppose.

While he was cutting up the dead bodies of animals, I settled myself down, after exploring the dâk-bungalow. There were three rooms, beside my own, which was a corner kennel, each giving into the other through dingy white

doors fastened with long iron bars. The bungalow was a very solid one, but the partition-walls of the rooms were almost jerry-built in their flimsiness. Every step or bang of a trunk echoed from my room down the other three, and every footfall came back tremulously from the far walls. For this reason I shut the door. There were no lamps —only candles in long glass shades. An oil wick was set in the bath-room.

For bleak, unadulterated misery that dâk-bungalow was the worst of the many that I had ever set foot in. There was no fireplace, and the windows would not open, so a brazier of charcoal would have been useless. The rain and the wind splashed and gurgled and moaned round the house, and the toddy-palms rattled and roared. Half a dozen jackals went through the compound singing, and a hyena stood afar off and mocked them. A hyena would convince a Sadducee of the Resurrection of the Dead—the worst sort of Dead. Then came the *ratub*—a curious meal, half native and half English in composition—with the old *khansamah* babbling behind my chair about dead and gone English people, and the wind-blown candles playing shadow-bo-peep with the bed and the mosquito-curtains.

It was just the sort of dinner and evening to make a man think of every single one of his past sins, and of all the others that he intended to commit if he lived.

Sleep, for several hundred reasons, was not easy. The lamp in the bath-room threw the most absurd shadows into the room, and the wind was beginning to talk nonsense.

Just when the reasons were drowsy with bloodsucking I heard the regular—"Let-us-take-and-heave-him-over" grunt of doolie-bearers in the compound. First one doolie came in, then a second, and then a third. I heard the doolies dumped on the ground, and the shutter in front of my door shook. "That's some one trying to come in," I said. But no one spoke, and I persuaded myself that it was the gusty wind. The shutter of the room next to mine was attacked, flung back, and the inner door opened. "That's some Sub-Deputy Assistant," I said "and he has brought his friends with him. Now they'll talk and spit and smoke for an hour."

But there were no voices and no footsteps. No one was putting his luggage into the next room. The door shut, and I thanked Providence that I was to be left in peace. But I was curious to know where the doolies had gone. I got out of bed and looked into the darkness. There was never a sign of a doolie. Just as I was getting into bed again, I heard, in the next room, the sound that no man in his senses can possibly mistake—the whir of a billiard ball down the length of the slates when the striker is stringing for break. No other sound is like it. A minute afterwards there was another whir, and I got into bed. I

was not frightened—indeed I was not. I was very curious to know what had become of the doolies. I jumped into bed for that reason.

Next minute I heard the double click of a cannon and my hair sat up. It is a mistake to say that hair stands up. The skin of the head tightens and you can feel a faint, prickly bristling all over the scalp. That is the hair sitting up.

There was a whir and a click, and both sounds could only have been made by one thing—a billiard ball. I argued the matter out at great length with myself; and the more I argued the less probable it seemed that one bed, one table, and two chairs—all the furniture of the room next to mine—could so exactly duplicate the sounds of a game of billiards. After another cannon, a three-cushion one to judge by the whir, I argued no more. I had found my ghost and would have given worlds to have escaped from that dâk-bungalow. I listened, and with each listen the game grew clearer. There was whir on whir and click on click. Sometimes there was a double click and a whir and another click. Beyond any sort of doubt, people were playing billiards in the next room. And the next room was not big enough to hold a billiard table!

Between the pauses of the wind I heard the game go forward—stroke after stroke. I tried to believe that I could not hear voices; but that attempt was a failure.

Do you know what fear is? Not ordinary fear of insult, injury or death, but abject, quivering dread of something that you cannot see—fear that dries the inside of the mouth and half of the throat—fear that makes you sweat on the palms of the hands, and gulp in order to keep the uvula at work? This is a fine Fear—a great cowardice, and must be felt to be appreciated. The very improbability of billiards in a dâk-bungalow proved the reality of the thing. No man—drunk or sober—could imagine a game at billiards, or invent the spitting crack of a "screw-cannon."

A severe course of dâk-bungalows has this disadvantage—it breeds infinite credulity. If a man said to a confirmed dâk-bungalow-haunter:—"There is a corpse in the next room, and there's a mad girl in the next but one, and the woman and man on that camel have just eloped from a place sixty miles away," the hearer would not disbelieve because he would know that nothing is too wild, grotesque, or horrible to happen in a dâk-bungalow.

This credulity, unfortunately, extends to ghosts. A rational person fresh from his own house would have turned on his side and slept. I did not. So surely as I was given up as a bad carcass by the scores of things in the bed because the bulk of my blood was in my heart, so surely did I hear every stroke of a long game at billiards played in the echoing room behind the iron-barred door. My dominant fear was that the players might want a marker.

It was an absurd fear; because creatures who could play in the dark would be above such superfluities. I only know that that was my terror; and it was real.

After a long long while, the game stopped, and the door banged. I slept because I was dead tired. Otherwise I should have preferred to have kept awake. Not for everything in Asia would I have dropped the door-bar and peered into the dark of the next room.

When the morning came, I considered that I had done well and wisely and inquired for the means of departure.

"By the way, *khansamah*," I said, "what were those three doolies doing in my compound in the night?"

"There were no doolies," said the *khansamah*.

I went into the next room and the daylight streamed through the open door. I was immensely brave. I would, at that hour, have played Black Pool with the owner of the big Black Pool down below.

"Has this place always been a dâk-bungalow?" I asked.

"No," said the *khansamah*. "Ten or twenty years ago, I have forgotten how long, it was a billiard-room."

"A how much?"

"A billiard-room for the Sahibs who built the Railway. I was *khansamah* then in the big house where all the Railway-Sahibs lived, and I used to come across with brandy-*shrab*,

These three rooms were all one, and they held a big table on which the Sahibs played every evening. But the Sahibs are all dead now, and the Railway runs, you say, nearly to Kabul."

"Do you remember anything about the Sahibs?"

"It is long ago, but I remember that one Sahib, a fat man and always angry, was playing here one night, and he said to me:—'Mangal Khan, brandy *pani do*,' and I filled the glass, and he bent over the table to strike, and his head fell lower and lower till it hit the table, and his spectacles came off, and when we—the Sahibs and I myself—ran to lift him he was dead. I helped to carry him out. Aha, he was a strong Sahib! But he is dead and I, old Mangal Khan, am still living, by your favor."

That was more than enough! I had my ghost—a first-hand, authenticated article. I would write to the Society for Psychical Research—I would paralyze the Empire with the news! But I would, first of all, put eighty miles of assessed crop-land between myself and that dâk-bungalow before nightfall. The Society might send their regular agent to investigate later on.

I went into my own room and prepared to pack after noting down the facts of the case. As I smoked I heard the game begin again,—with a miss in balk this time, for the whir was a short one.

The door was open and I could see into the room. *Click—click!* That was a cannon. I entered the room without fear, for there was sunlight within and a fresh breeze without. The unseen game was going on at a tremendous rate. And well it might, when a restless little rat was running to and fro inside the dingy ceiling-cloth, and a piece of loose window-sash was making fifty breaks off the window-bolt as it shook in the breeze!

Impossible to mistake the sound of billiard balls! Impossible to mistake the whir of a ball over the slate! But I was to be excused. Even when I shut my enlightened eyes the sound was marvelously like that of a fast game.

Entered angrily the faithful partner of my sorrows, Kadir Baksh.

"This bungalow is very bad and low-caste! No wonder the Presence was disturbed and is speckled. Three sets of doolie-bearers came to the bungalow late last night when I was sleeping outside, and said that it was their custom to rest in the rooms set apart for the English people! What honor has the *khansamah?* They tried to enter, but I told them to go. No wonder, if these *Oorias* have been here, that the Presence is sorely spotted. It is shame, and the work of a dirty man."

Kadir Baksh did not say that he had taken from each gang two annas for rent in advance, and then, beyond my earshot, had beaten them with the big green umbrella whose use

I could never before divine. But Kadir Baksh has no notions of morality.

There was an interview with the *khansamah*, but as he promptly lost his head, wrath gave place to pity, and pity led to a long conversation, in the course of which he put the fat Engineer-Sahib's tragic death in three separate stations—two of them fifty miles away. The third shift was to Calcutta, and there the Sahib died while driving a dog-cart.

If I had encouraged him the *khansamah* would have wandered all through Bengal with his corpse.

I did not go away as soon as I intended. I stayed for the night, while the wind and the rat and the sash and the window-bolt played a ding-dong "hundred and fifty up." Then the wind ran out and the billiards stopped, and I felt that I had ruined my one genuine, hall-market ghost story.

Had I only stopped at the proper time, I could have made *anything* out of it.

That was the bitterest thought of all!

THE STRANGE RIDE OF MORROWBIE JUKES

Alive or dead—there is no other way.—*Native Proverb.*

THERE is, as the conjurers say, no deception about this tale. Jukes by accident stumbled upon a village that is well known to exist, though he is the only Englishman who has been there. A somewhat similar institution used to flourish on the outskirts of Calcutta, and there is a story that if you go into the heart of Bikanir, which is in the heart of the Great Indian Desert, you shall come across not a village, but a town where the Dead who did not die but may not live have established their headquarters. And, since it is perfectly true that in the same Desert is a wonderful city where all the rich money-lenders retreat after they have made their fortunes (fortunes so vast that the owners cannot trust even the strong hand of the Government to protect them, but take refuge in the waterless sands), and drive sumptuous C-spring barouches, and buy beautiful girls and decorate their palaces with gold and ivory and Minton tiles and mother-o'-pearl, I do not see why Jukes's tale should not be

true. He is a Civil Engineer, with a head for plans and distances and things of that kind, and he certainly would not take the trouble to invent imaginary traps. He could earn more by doing his legitimate work. He never varies the tale in the telling, and grows very hot and indignant when he thinks of the disrespectful treatment he received. He wrote this quite straightforwardly at first, but he has since touched it up in places and introduced Moral Reflections, thus:—

In the beginning it all arose from a slight attack of fever. My work necessitated my being in camp for some months between Pakpattan and Mubarakpur—a desolate sandy stretch of country as every one who has had the misfortune to go there may know. My coolies were neither more nor less exasperating than other gangs, and my work demanded sufficient attention to keep me from moping, had I been inclined to so unmanly a weakness.

On the 23d December, 1884, I felt a little feverish. There was a full moon at the time, and, in consequence, every dog near my tent was baying it. The brutes assembled in twos and threes and drove me frantic. A few days previously I had shot one loud-mouthed singer and suspended his carcass *in terrorem* about fifty yards from my tent-door. But his friends fell upon, fought for, and ultimately devoured the body: and, as it seemed

to me, sang their hymns of thanksgiving afterwards with renewed energy.

The light-headedness which accompanies fever acts differently on different men. My irritation gave way, after a short time, to a fixed determination to slaughter one huge black and white beast who had been foremost in song and first in flight throughout the evening. Thanks to a shaking hand and a giddy head I had already missed him twice with both barrels of my shotgun, when it struck me that my best plan would be to ride him down in the open and finish him off with a hog-spear. This, of course, was merely the semi-delirious notion of a fever patient; but I remember that it struck me at the time as being eminently practical and feasible.

I therefore ordered my groom to saddle Pornic and bring him round quietly to the rear of my tent. When the pony was ready, I stood at his head prepared to mount and dash out as soon as the dog should again lift up his voice. Pornic, by the way, had not been out of his pickets for a couple of days; the night air was crisp and chilly; and I was armed with a specially long and sharp pair of persuaders with which I had been rousing a sluggish cob that afternoon. You will easily believe, then, that when he was let go he went quickly. In one moment, for the brute bolted as straight as a die, the tent was left far behind, and we were flying over the smooth sandy soil at racing speed. In another we

had passed the wretched dog, and I had almost forgotten why it was that I had taken horse and hog-spear.

The delirium of fever and the excitement of rapid motion through the air must have taken away the remnant of my senses. I have a faint recollection of standing upright in my stirrups, and of brandishing my hog-spear at the great white Moon that looked down so calmly on my mad gallop; and of shouting challenges to the camel-thorn bushes as they whizzed passed. Once or twice, I believe, I swayed forward on Pornic's neck, and literally hung on by my spurs—as the marks next morning showed.

The wretched beast went forward like a thing possessed, over what seemed to be a limitless expanse of moonlit sand. Next, I remember, the ground rose suddenly in front of us, and as we topped the ascent I saw the waters of the Sutlej shining like a silver bar below. The Pornic blundered heavily on his nose, and we rolled together down some unseen slope.

I must have lost consciousness, for when I recovered I was lying on my stomach in a heap of soft white sand, and the dawn was beginning to break dimly over the edge of the slope down which I had fallen. As the light grew stronger I saw that I was at the bottom of a horseshoe-shaped crater of sand, opening on one side directly on to the shoals of the Sutlej. My fever had altogether left me, and

with the exception of a slight dizziness in the head, I felt no bad effects from the fall over night.

Pornic, who was standing a few yards away, was naturally a good deal exhausted, but had not hurt himself in the least. His saddle, a favorite polo one, was much knocked about, and had been twisted under his belly. It took me some time to put him to rights, and in the meantime I had ample opportunities of observing the spot into which I had so foolishly dropped.

At the risk of being considered tedious, I must describe it at length ; inasmuch as an accurate mental picture of its peculiarities will be of material assistance in enabling the reader to understand what follows.

Imagine then, as I have said before, a horseshoe-shaped crater of sand with steeply graded sand walls about thirty-five feet high. (The slope, I fancy, must have been about 65°). This crater enclosed a level piece of ground about fifty yards long by thirty at its broadest part, with a rude well in the center. Round the bottom of a crater, about three feet from the level of the ground proper, ran a series of eighty-three semi-circular, ovoid, square, and multilateral holes, all about three feet at the mouth. Each hole on inspection showed that it was carefully shored internally with driftwood and bamboos, and over the mouth a wooden drip-board projected, like the peak of a jockey's cap, for two feet. No

sign of life was visible in these tunnels, but a most sickening stench pervaded the entire amphitheater—a stench fouler than any which my wanderings in Indian villages have introduced me to.

Having remounted Pornic, who was as anxious as I to get back to camp, I rode round the base of the horseshoe to find some place whence an exit would be practicable. The inhabitants, whoever they might be, had not thought fit to put in an appearance, so I was left to my own devices. My first attempt to "rush" Pornic up the steep sand-banks showed me that I had fallen into a trap exactly on the same model as that which the ant-lion sets for its prey. At each step the shifting sand poured down from above in tons, and rattled on the drip-boards of the holes like small shot. A couple of ineffectual charges sent us both rolling down to the bottom, half choked with the torrents of sand; and I was constrained to turn my attention to the river-bank.

Here everything seemed easy enough. The sand hills ran down to the river edge, it is true, but there were plenty of shoals and shallows across which I could gallop Pornic, and find my way back to *terra firma* by turning sharply to the right or the left. As I led Pornic over the sands I was startled by the faint pop of a rifle across the river; and at the same moment a bullet dropped with a sharp "*whit*" close to Pornic's head.

There was no mistaking the nature of the missile—a regulation Martini-Henry "picket." About five hundred yards away a country-boat was anchored in midstream; and a jet of smoke drifting away from its bows in the still morning air showed me whence the delicate attention had come. Was ever a respectable gentleman in such an *impasse?* The treacherous sand slope allowed no escape from a spot which I had visited most involuntarily, and a promenade on the river frontage was the signal for a bombardment from some insane native in a boat. I'm afraid that I lost my temper very much indeed.

Another bullet reminded me that I had better save my breath to cool my porridge; and I retreated hastily up the sands and back to the horseshoe, where I saw that the noise of the rifle had drawn sixty-five human beings from the badger-holes which I had up till that point supposed to be untenanted. I found myself in the midst of a crowd of spectators — about forty men, twenty women, and one child who could not have been more than five years old. They were all scantily clothed in that salmon-colored cloth which one associates with Hindu mendicants, and, at first sight, gave me the impression of a band of loathsome *fakirs.* The filth and repulsiveness of the assembly were beyond all description, and I shuddered to think what their life in the badger-holes must be.

Even in these days, when local self-govern-

ment has destroyed the greater part of a native's respect for a Sahib, I have been accustomed to a certain amount of civility from my inferiors, and on approaching the crowd naturally expected that there would be some recognition of my presence. As a matter of fact there was; but it was by no means what I had looked for.

The ragged crew actually laughed at me—such laughter I hope I may never hear again. They cackled, yelled, whistled, and howled as I walked into their midst; some of them literally throwing themselves down on the ground in convulsions of unholy mirth. In a moment I had let go Pornic's head, and, irritated beyond expression at the morning's adventure, commenced cuffing those nearest to me with all the force I could. The wretches dropped under my blows like nine-pins, and the laughter gave place to wails for mercy; while those yet untouched clasped me round the knees, imploring me in all sorts of uncouth tongues to spare them.

In the tumult, and just when I was feeling very much ashamed of myself for having thus easily given way to my temper, a thin, high voice murmured in English from behind my shoulder:—"Sahib! Sahib! Do you not know me? Sahib, it is Gunga Dass, the telegraph-master."

I spun round quickly and faced the speaker.

Gunga Dass (I have, of course, no hesitation in mentioning the man's real name) I had

known four years before as a Deccanee Brahmin lent by the Punjab Government to one of the Khalsia States. He was in charge of a branch telegraph-office there, and when I had last met him was a jovial, full-stomached, portly Government servant with a marvelous capacity for making bad puns in English—a peculiarity which made me remember him long after I had forgotten his services to me in his official capacity. It is seldom that a Hindu makes English puns.

Now, however, the man was changed beyond all recognition. Caste-mark, stomach, slate-colored continuations, and unctuous speech were all gone. I looked at a withered skeleton, turbanless and almost naked, with long matted hair and deep-set codfish-eyes. But for a crescent-shaped scar on the left cheek—the result of an accident for which I was responsible—I should never have known him. But it was indubitably Gunga Dass, and—for this I was thankful—an English-speaking native who might at least tell me the meaning of all that I had gone through that day.

The crowd retreated to some distance as I turned towards the miserable figure, and ordered him to show me some method of escaping from the crater. He held a freshly plucked crow in his hand, and in reply to my question climbed slowly on a platform of sand which ran in front of the holes, and commenced lighting a fire there in silence. Dried bents, sand-poppies, and driftwood burn quickly;

and I derived much consolation from the fact that he lit them with an ordinary sulphur-match. When they were in a bright glow, and the crow was neatly spitted in front thereof, Gunga Dass began without a word of preamble :—

"There are only two kinds of men, Sar. The alive and the dead. When you are dead you are dead, but when you are alive you live." (Here the crow demanded his attention for an instant as it twirled before the fire in danger of being burnt to a cinder.) "If you die at home and do not die when you come to the ghât to be burnt you come here."

The nature of the reeking village was made plain now, and all that I had known or read of the grotesque and the horrible paled before the fact just communicated by the ex-Brahmin. Sixteen years ago, when I first landed in Bombay, I had been told by a wandering Armenian of the existence, somewhere in India, of a place to which such Hindus as had the misfortune to recover from trance or catalepsy were conveyed and kept, and I recollect laughing heartily at what I was then pleased to consider a traveler's tale. Sitting at the bottom of the sand-trap, the memory of Watson's Hotel, with its swinging punkahs, white-robed attendants, and the sallowed faced Armenian, rose up in my mind as vividly as a photograph, and I burst into a loud fit of laughter. The contrast was too absurd!

Gunga Dass, as he bent over the unclean

bird, watched me curiously. Hindus seldom laugh, and his surroundings were not such as to move Gunga Dass to any undue excess of hilarity. He removed the crow solemnly from the wooden spit and as solemnly devoured it. Then he continned his story, which I give in his own words :—

"In epidemics of the cholera you are carried to be burnt almost before you are dead. When you come to the riverside the cold air, perhaps, makes you alive, and then, if you are only little alive, mud is put on your nose and mouth and you die conclusively. If you are rather more alive, more mud is put; but if you are too lively they let you go and take you away. I was too lively, and made protestation with anger against the indignities that they endeavored to press upon me. In those days I was Brahmin and proud man. Now I am dead man and eat"—here he eyed the well-gnawed breast bone with the first sign of emotion that I had seen in him since we met—" crows, and other things. They took me from my sheets when they saw that I was too lively and gave me medicines for one week, and I survived successfully. Then they sent me by rail from my place to Okara Station with a man to take care of me ; and at Okara Station we met two other men, and they conducted we three on camels, in the night, from Okara Station to this place, and they propelled me from the top to the bottom, and the other two succeeded, and I have been here ever since, two

and a half years. Once I was Brahmin and proud man, and now I eat crows."

"There is no way of getting out?"

"None of what kind at all. When I first came I made experiments frequently and all the others also, but we have always succumbed to the sand which is precipitated upon our heads."

"But surely," I broke in at this point, "the river-front is open, and it is worth while dodging the bullets; while at night——"

I had already matured a rough plan of escape which a natural instinct of selfishness forbade me sharing with Gunga Dass. He, however, divined my unspoken thought almost as soon as it was formed; and, to my intense astonishment, gave vent to a long low chuckle of derision—the laughter, be it understood, of a superior or at least of an equal. "You will not"—he had dropped the Sir completely after his opening sentence—"make any escape that way. But you can try. I have tried. Once only."

The sensation of nameless terror and abject fear which I had in vain attempted to strive against overmastered me completely. My long fast—it was now close upon ten o'clock, and I had eaten nothing since tiffin on the previous day—combined with the violent and unnatural agitation of the ride had exhausted me, and I verily believe that, for a few minutes, I acted as one mad. I hurled myself against the pitiless sand-slope. I ran round

the base of the crater, blaspheming and praying by turns. I crawled out among the sedges of the river-front, only to be driven back each time in an agony of nervous dread by the rifle-bullets which cut up the sand round me—for I dared not face the death of a mad dog among that hideous crowd—and finally fell, spent and raving, at the curb of the well. No one had taken the slightest notice of an exhibition which makes me blush hotly even when I think of it now.

Two or three men trod on my panting body as they drew water, but they were evidently used to this sort of thing, and had no time to waste upon me. The situation was humiliating. Gunga Dass, indeed, when he had banked the embers of his fire with sand, was at some pains to throw half a cupful of fetid water over my head, an attention for which I could have fallen on my knees and thanked him, but he was laughing all the while in the same mirthless, wheezy key that greeted me on my first attempt to force the shoals. And so, in a semi-comatose condition, I lay till noon. Then, being only a man after all, I felt hungry, and intimated as much to Gunga Dass, whom I had begun to regard as my natural protector. Following the impulse of the outer world when dealing with natives, I put my hand into my pocket and drew out four annas. The absurdity of the gift struck me at once, and I was about to replace the money.

Gunga Dass, however, was of a different opinion. "Give me the money," said he; "all you have, or I will get help, and we will kill you!" All this as if it were the most natural thing in the world!

A Briton's first impulse, I believe, is to guard the contents of his pockets; but a moment's reflection convinced me of the futility of differing with the one man who had it in his power to make me comfortable; and with whose help it was possible that I might eventually escape from the crater. I gave him all the money in my possession, Rs. 9-8-5—nine rupees eight annas and five pie—for I always keep small change as *bakshish* when I am in camp. Gunga Dass clutched the coins, and hid them at once in his ragged loin-cloth, his expression changing to something diabolical as he looked round to assure himself that no one had observed us.

"*Now* I will give you something to eat," said he.

What pleasure the possession of my money could have afforded him I am unable to say; but inasmuch as it did give him evident delight I was not sorry that I had parted with it so readily, for I had no doubt that he would have had me killed if I had refused. One does not protest against the vagaries of a den of wild beasts; and my companions were lower than any beasts. While I devoured what Gunga Dass had provided, a coarse *chapatti* and a cupful

of the foul well-water, the people showed not the faintest sign of curiosity—that curiosity which is so rampant, as a rule, in an Indian village.

I could even fancy that they despised me. At all events they treated me with the most chilling indifference, and Gunga Dass was nearly as bad. I plied him with questions about the terrible village, and received extremely unsatisfactory answers. So far as I could gather, it had been in existence from time immemorial—whence I concluded that it was at least a century old—and during that time no one had ever been known to escape from it. [I had to control myself here with both hands, lest the blind terror should lay hold of me a second time and drive me raving round the crater.] Gunga Dass took a malicious pleasure in emphasizing this point and in watching me wince. Nothing that I could do would induce him to tell me who the mysterious "They" were.

"It is so ordered," he would reply, "and I do not yet know any one who has disobeyed the orders."

"Only wait till my servants find that I am missing," I retorted, "and I promise you that this place shall be cleared off the face of the earth, and I'll give you a lesson in civility, too, my friend."

"Your servants would be torn in pieces before they came near this place; and, besides, you are dead, my dear friend. It is

not your fault, of course, but none the less you are dead *and* buried."

At irregular intervals supplies of food, I was told, were dropped down from the land side into the amphitheater, and the inhabitants fought for them like wild beasts. When a man felt his death coming on he retreated to his lair and died there. The body was sometimes dragged out of the hole and thrown on to the sand, or allowed to rot where it lay.

The phrase "thrown on to the sand" caught my attention, and I asked Gunga Dass whether this sort of thing was not likely to breed a pestilence.

"That," said he, with another of his wheezy chuckles, "you may see for yourself subsequently. You will have much time to make observations."

Whereat, to his great delight, I winced once more and hastily continued the conversation: —"And how do you live here from day to day? What do you do?" The question elicited exactly the same answer as before—coupled with the information that "this place is like your European heaven; there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage."

Gunga Dass had been educated at a Mission School, and, as he himself admitted, had he only changed his religion "like a wise man," might have avoided the living grave which was now his portion. But as long as I was with him I fancy he was happy.

Here was a Sahib, a representative of the

dominant race, helpless as a child and completely at the mercy of his native neighbors. In a deliberate lazy way he set himself to torture me as a schoolboy would devote a rapturous half-hour to watching the agonies of an impaled beetle, or as a ferret in a blind burrow might glue himself comfortably to the neck of a rabbit. The burden of his conversation was that there was no escape "of no kind whatever," and that I should stay here till I died and was "thrown on to the sand." If it were possible to forejudge the conversation of the Damned on the advent of a new soul in their abode, I should say that they would speak as Gunga Dass did to me throughout that long afternoon. I was powerless to protest or answer; all my energies being devoted to a struggle against the inexplicable terror that threatened to overwhelm me again and again. I can compare the feeling to nothing except the struggles of a man against the overpowering nausea of the Channel passage—only my agony was of the spirit and infinitely more terrible.

As the day wore on, the inhabitants began to appear in full strength to catch the rays of the afternoon sun, which were now sloping in at the mouth of the crater. They assembled in little knots, and talked among themselves without even throwing a glance in my direction. About four o'clock, as far as I could judge, Gunga Dass rose and dived into his lair for a moment, emerging with a live

crow in his hands. The wretched bird was in a most draggled and deplorable condition, but seemed to be in no way afraid of its master. Advancing cautiously to the river-front, Gunga Dass stepped from tussock to tussock until he had reached a smooth patch of sand directly in the line of the boat's fire. The occupants of the boat took no notice. Here he stopped, and with a couple of dexterous turns of the wrist, pegged the bird on its back with outstretched wings. As was only natural, the crow began to shriek at once and beat the air with its claws. In a few seconds the clamor had attracted the attention of a bevy of wild crows on a shoal a few hundred yards away, where they were discussing something that looked like a corpse. Half a dozen crows flew over at once to see what was going on, and also, as it proved, to attack the pinioned bird. Gunga Dass, who had lain down on a tussock, motioned to me to be quiet, though I fancy this was a needless precaution. In a moment, and before I could see how it happened, a wild crow, who had grappled with the shrieking and helpless bird, was entangled in the latter's claws, swiftly disengaged by Gunga Dass, and pegged down beside its companion in adversity. Curiosity, it seemed, overpowered the rest of the flock, and almost before Gunga Dass and I had time to withdraw to the tussock, two more captives were struggling in the upturned claws of the decoys. So the chase—if I can

give it so dignified a name—continued until Gunga Dass had captured seven crows. Five of them he throttled at once, reserving two for further operations another day. I was a good deal impressed by this, to me, novel method of securing food, and complimented Gunga Dass on his skill.

"It is nothing to do," said he. "To-morrow you must do it for me. You are stronger than I am."

This calm assumption of superiority upset me not a little, and I answered peremptorily: —"Indeed, you old ruffian! What do you think I have given you money for?"

"Very well," was the unmoved reply. "Perhaps not to-morrow, nor the day after, nor subsequently; but in the end, and for many years, you will catch crows and eat crows, and you will thank your European Gods that you have crows to catch and eat."

I could have cheerfully strangled him for this; but judged it best under the circumstances to smother my resentment. An hour later I was eating one of the crows; and, as Gunga Dass had said, thanking my God that I had a crow to eat. Never as long as I live shall I forget that evening meal. The whole population were squatting on the hard sand platform opposite their dens, huddled over tiny fires of refuse and dried rushes. Death, having once laid his hand upon these men and forborne to strike, seemed to stand aloof from them now; for most of our company

were old men, bent and worn and twisted with years, and women aged to all appearance as the Fates themselves. They sat together in knots and talked—God only knows what they found to discuss—in low equable tones, curiously in contrast to the strident babble with which natives are accustomed to make day hideous. Now and then an access of that sudden fury which had possessed me in the morning would lay hold on a man or woman; and with yells and imprecations the sufferer would attack the steep slope until, baffled and bleeding, he fell back on the platform incapable of moving a limb. The others would never even raise their eyes when this happened, as men too well aware of the futility of their fellows' attempts and wearied with their useless repetition. I saw four such outbursts in the course of that evening.

Gunga Dass took an eminently business-like view of my situation, and while we were dining—I can afford to laugh at the recollection now, but it was painful enough at the time—propounded the terms on which he would consent to "do" for me. My nine rupees eight annas, he argued, at the rate of three annas a day, would provide me with food for fifty-one days, or about seven weeks; that is to say, he would be willing to cater for me for that length of time. At the end of it I was to look after myself. For a further consideration—*videlicet* my boots—he would be willing to allow me to occupy the den next to his

own, and would supply me with as much dried grass for bedding as he could spare.

"Very well, Gunga Dass," I replied; "to the first terms I cheerfully agree, but, as there is nothing on earth to prevent my killing you as you sit here and taking everything that you have" (I thought of the two invaluable crows at the time), "I flatly refuse to give you my boots and shall take whichever den I please."

The stroke was a bold one, and I was glad when I saw that it had succeeded. Gunga Dass changed his tone immediately, and disavowed all intention of asking for my boots. At the time it did not strike me as at all strange that I, a Civil Engineer, a man of thirteen years' standing in the Service, and I trust, an average Englishman, should thus calmly threaten murder and violence against the man who had, for a consideration, it is true, taken me under his wing. I had left the world, it seemed, for centuries. I was as certain then as I am now of my own existence, that in the accursed settlement there was no law save that of the strongest; that the living dead men had thrown behind them every canon of the world which had cast them out; and that I had to depend for my own life on my strength and vigilance alone. The crew of the ill-fated Mignonette are the only men who would understand my frame of mind. "At present," I argued to myself, "I am strong and a match for six of these wretches. It is im-

peratively necessary that I should, for my own sake, keep both health and strength until the hour of my release comes—if it ever does."

Fortified with these resolutions, I ate and drank as much as I could, and made Gunga Dass understand that I intended to be his master, and that the least sign of insubordination on his part would be visited with the only punishment I had it in my power to inflict—sudden and violent death. Shortly after this I went to bed. That is to say, Gunga Dass gave me a double armful of dried bents which I thrust down the mouth of the lair to the right of his, and followed myself, feet foremost; the hole running about nine feet into the sand with a slight downward inclination, and being neatly shored with timbers. From my den, which faced the river-front, I was able to watch the waters of the Sutlej flowing past under the light of a young moon and composed myself to sleep as best I might.

The horrors of that night I shall never forget. My den was nearly as narrow as a coffin, and the sides had been worn smooth and greasy by the contact of innumerable naked bodies, added to which it smelled abominably. Sleep was altogether out of question to one in my excited frame of mind. As the night wore on, it seemed that the entire amphitheater was filled with legions of unclean devils that, trooping up from the shoals below, mocked the unfortunates in their lairs.

Personally I am not of an imaginative tem-

perament,—very few Engineers are,—but on that occasion I was as completely prostrated with nervous terror as any woman. After half an hour or so, however, I was able once more to calmly review my chances of escape. Any exit by the steep sand walls was, of course, impracticable. I had been thoroughly convinced of this some time before. It was possible, just possible, that I might, in the uncertain moonlight, safely run the gauntlet of the rifle shots. The place was so full of terror for me that I was prepared to undergo any risk in leaving it. Imagine my delight, then, when after creeping stealthily to the river-front I found that the infernal boat was not there. My freedom lay before me in the next few steps!

By walking out to the first shallow pool that lay at the foot of the projecting left horn of the horseshoe, I could wade across, turn the flank of the crater, and make my way inland. Without a moment's hesitation I marched briskly past the tussocks where Gunga Dass had snared the crows, and out in the direction of the smooth white sand beyond. My first step from the tufts of dried grass showed me how utterly futile was any hope of escape; for, as I put my foot down, I felt an indescribable drawing, sucking motion of the sand below. Another moment and my leg was swallowed up nearly to the knee. In the moonlight the whole surface of the sand seemed to be shaken with devilish delight at

my disappointment. I struggled clear, sweating with terror and exertion, back to the tussocks behind me and fell on my face.

My only means of escape from the semicircle was protected with a quicksand!

How long I lay I have not the faintest idea; but I was roused at last by the malevolent chuckle of Gunga Dass at my ear. "I would advise you, Protector of the Poor" (the ruffian was speaking English) "to return to your house. It is unhealthy to lie down here. Moreover, when the boat returns, you will most certainly be rifled at." He stood over me in the dim light of the dawn, chuckling and laughing to himself. Suppressing my first impulse to catch the man by the neck and throw him on to the quicksand, I rose sullenly and followed him to the platform below the burrows.

Suddenly, and futilely as I thought while I spoke, I asked:—"Gunga Dass, what is the good of the boat if I can't get out *anyhow*?" I recollect that even in my deepest trouble had been speculating vaguely on the waste o ammunition in guarding an already well protected foreshore.

Gunga Dass laughed again and mad answer:—"They have the boat only in day time. It is for the reason that *there is a way* I hope we shall have the pleasure of your company for much longer time. It is a pleasan spot when you have been here some years an eaten roast crow long enough."

I staggered, numbed and helpless, towards the fetid burrow allotted to me, and fell asleep. An hour or so later I was awakened by a piercing scream—the shrill, high-pitched scream of a horse in pain. Those who have once heard that will never forget the sound. I found some little difficulty in scrambling out of the burrow. When I was in the open, I saw Pornic, my poor old Pornic, lying dead on the sandy soil. How they had killed him I cannot guess. Gunga Dass explained that horse was better than crow, and "greatest good of greatest number." is political maxim. We are now Republic, Mister Jukes, and you are entitled to a fair share of the beast. If you like, we will pass a vote of thanks. Shall I propose?"

Yes, we were a Republic indeed! A Republic of wild beasts penned at the bottom of a pit, to eat and fight and sleep till we died. I attempted no protest of any kind, but sat down and stared at the hideous sight in front of me. In less time almost than it takes me to write this, Pornic's body was divided, in some unclean way or other; the men and women had dragged the fragments on to the platform and were preparing their morning meal. Gunga Dass cooked mine. The almost irresistible impulse to fly at the sand walls until I was wearied laid hold of me afresh, and I had to struggle against it with all my might. Gunga Dass was offensively jocular till I told him that if he addressed an-

other remark of any kind whatever to me I should strangle him where he sat. This silenced him till silence became insupportable, and I bade him say something.

"You will live here till you die like the other Feringhi," he said coolly, watching me over the fragment of gristle that he was gnawing.

"What other Sahib, you swine? Speak at once, and don't stop to tell me a lie."

"He is over there," answered Gunga Dass, pointing to a burrow-mouth about four doors to the left of my own. "You can see for yourself. He died in the burrow as you will die, and I will die, and as all these men and women and the one child will also die."

"For pity's sake tell me all you know about him. Who was he? When did he come, and when did he die?"

This appeal was a weak step on my part. Gunga Dass only leered and replied:—"I will not—unless you give me something first."

Then I recollected where I was, and struck the man between the eyes, partially stunning him. He stepped down from the platform at once, and, cringing and fawning and weeping and attempting to embrace my feet, led me round to the burrow which he had indicated.

"I know nothing whatever about the gentleman. Your God be my witness that I do not. He was as anxious to escape as you were, and he was shot from the boat, though we

all did all things to prevent him from attempting. He was shot here." Gunga Dass laid his hand on his lean stomach and bowed to the earth.

"Well, and what then? Go on!"

"And then—and then, Your Honor, we carried him in to his house and gave him water, and put wet cloths on the wound, and he laid down in his house and gave up the ghost."

"In how long? In how long?"

"About half an hour, after he received his wound. I call Vishn to witness," yelled the wretched man, "that I did everything for him. Everything which was possible, that I did!"

He threw himself down on the ground and clasped my ankles. But I had my doubts about Gunga Dass's benevolence, and kicked him off as he lay protesting.

"I believe you robbed him of everything he had. But I can find out in a minute or two. How long was the Sahib here?"

"Nearly a year and a half. I think he must have gone mad. But hear me swear, Protector of the Poor! Won't Your Honor hear me swear that I never touched an article that belonged to him? What is Your Worship going to do?"

I had taken Gunga Dass by the waist and had hauled him on to the platform opposite the deserted burrow. As I did so I thought of my wretched fellow-prisoner's unspeakable

misery among all these horrors for eighteen months, and the final agony of dying like a rat in a hole, with a bullet-wound in the stomach. Gunga Dass fancied I was going to kill him and howled pitifully. The rest of the population, in the plethora that follows a full flesh meal, watched us without stirring.

"Go inside, Gunga Dass," said I, "and fetch it out."

I was feeling sick and faint with horror now. Gunga Dass nearly rolled off the platform and howled aloud.

"But I am Brahmin, Sahib—a high-caste Brahmin. By your soul, by your father's soul, do not make me do this thing!"

"Brahmin or no Brahmin, by my soul and my father's soul, in you go!" I said, and, seizing him by the shoulders, I crammed his head into the mouth of the burrow, kicked the rest of him in, and, sitting down, covered my face with my hands.

At the end of a few minutes I heard a rustle and a creak; then Gunga Dass in a sobbing, choking whisper speaking to himself; then a soft thud—and I uncovered my eyes.

The dry sand had turned the corpse entrusted to its keeping into a yellow-brown mummy. I told Gunga Dass to stand off while I examined it. The body—clad in an olive-green hunting-suit much stained and worn, with leather pads on the shoulders—was that of a man between thirty and forty above middle height, with light, sandy hair,

long mustache, and a rough unkempt beard. The left canine of the upper jaw was missing, and a portion of the lobe of the right ear was gone. On the second finger of the left hand was a ring—a shield-shaped bloodstone set in gold, with a monogram that might have been either "B. K." or "B. L." On the third finger of the right hand was a silver ring in the shape of a coiled cobra, much worn and tarnished. Gunga Dass deposited a handful of trifles he had picked out of the burrow at my feet, and, covering the face of the body with my handkerchief, I turned to examine these. I give the full list in the hope that it may lead to the identification of the unfortunate man:—

1. Bowl of a briarwood pipe, serrated at the edge; much worn and blackened; bound with string at the screw.

2. Two patent-lever keys; wards of both broken.

3. Tortoise-shell handled penknife, silver or nickel, name-plate, marked with monogram "B.K."

4. Envelope, post-mark undecipherable, bearing a Victorian stamp, addressed to "Miss Mon—" (rest illegible) — "ham"— "nt."

5. Imitation crocodile-skin note-book with pencil. First forty-five pages blank; four and a half illegible; fifteen others filled with private memoranda relating chiefly to three persons—a Mrs. L. Singleton, abbreviated

several times to "Lot Single," "Mrs. S. May," and "Garmison," referred to in places as "Jerry" or "Jack."

6. Handle of small-sized hunting-knife. Blade snapped short. Buck's horn, diamond cut, with swivel and ring on the butt; fragment of cotton cord attached.

It must not be supposed that I inventoried all these things on the spot as fully as I have here written them down. The note-book first attracted my attention, and I put it in my pocket with a view to studying it later on. The rest of the articles I conveyed to my burrow for safety's sake, and there, being a methodical man, I inventoried them. I then returned to the corpse and ordered Gunga Dass to help me to carry it out to the river-front. While we were engaged in this, the exploded shell of an old brown cartridge dropped out of one of the pockets and rolled at my feet. Gunga Dass had not seen it; and I fell to thinking that a man does not carry exploded cartridge-cases, especially "browns," which will not bear loading twice, about with him when shooting. In other words, that cartridge-case had been fired inside the crater. Consequently there must be a gun somewhere. I was on the verge of asking Gunga Dass, but checked myself, knowing that he would lie. We laid the body down on the edge of the quicksand by the tussocks. It was my intention to push it out and let it be swallowed up —the only possible mode of burial that I could

think of. I ordered Gunga Dass to go away.

Then I gingerly put the corpse out on the quicksand. In doing so, it was lying face downward, I tore the frail and rotten khaki shooting-coat open, disclosing a hideous cavity in the back. I have already told you that the dry sand had, as it were, mummified the body. A moment's glance showed that the gaping hole had been caused by a gun-shot wound; the gun must have been fired with the muzzle almost touching the back. The shooting-coat, being intact, had been drawn over the body after death, which must have been instantaneous. The secret of the poor wretch's death was plain to me in a flash. Some one of the crater, presumably Gunga Dass, must have shot him with his own gun—the gun that fitted the brown cartridges. He had never attempted to escape in the face of the rifle-fire from the boat.

I pushed the corpse out hastily, and saw it sink from sight literally in a few seconds. I shuddered as I watched. In a dazed, half-conscious way I turned to peruse the note-book. A stained and discolored slip of paper had been inserted between the binding and the back, and dropped out as I opened the pages. This is what it contained :—"*Four out from crow-clump: three left; nine out; two right; three back; two left; fourteen out; two left; seven out; one left; nine back; two right; six back; four right; seven back.*" The paper

had been burnt and charred at the edges. What it meant I could not understand. I sat down on the dried bents turning it over and over between my fingers, until I was aware of Gunga Dass standing immediately behind me with glowing eyes and outstretched hands.

"Have you got it?" he panted. "Will you not let me look at it also? I swear that I will return it."

"Got what? Return what?" I asked.

"That which you have in your hands. It will help us both." He stretched out his long, bird-like talons, trembling with eagerness.

"I could never find it," he continued. "He had secreted it about his person. Therefore I shot him, but nevertheless I was unable to obtain it."

Gunga Dass had quite forgotten his little fiction about the rifle-bullet. I received the information perfectly calmly. Morality is blunted by consorting with the Dead who are alive.

"What on earth are you raving about? What is it you want me to give you?"

"The piece of paper in the note-book. It will help us both. Oh, you fool! You fool! Can you not see what it will do for us? We shall escape!"

His voice rose almost to a scream, and he danced with excitement before me. I own I was moved at the chance of getting away.

"Don't skip! Explain yourself. Do you

mean to say that this slip of paper will help us? What does it mean?"

"Read it aloud! Read it aloud! I beg and I pray to you to read it aloud."

I did so. Gunga Dass listened delightedly, and drew an irregular line in the sand with his fingers.

"See now! It was the length of his gun-barrels without the stock. I have those barrels. Four gun-barrels out from the place where I caught crows. Straight out; do you follow me? Then three left—Ah! how well I remember when that man worked it out night after night. Then nine out, and so on. Out is always straight before you across the quicksand. He told me so before I killed him."

"But if you knew all this why didn't you get out before?"

"I did *not* know it. He told me that he was working it out a year and a half ago, and how he was working it out night after night when the boat had gone away, and he could get out near the quicksand safely. Then he said that we would get away together. But I was afraid that he would leave me behind one night when he had worked it all out, and so I shot him. Besides, it is not advisable that the men who once get in here should escape. Only I, and *I* am a Brahmin."

The prospect of escape had brought Gunga Dass's caste back to him. He stood up, walked about and gesticulated violently. Eventually I managed to make him talk

soberly, and he told me how this Englishman had spent six months night after night in exploring, inch by inch, the passage across the quicksand; how he had declared it to be simplicity itself up to within about twenty yards of the river bank after turning the flank of the left horn of the horseshoe. This much he had evidently not completed when Gunga Dass shot him with his own gun.

In my frenzy of delight at the possibilities of escape I recollect shaking hands effusively with Gunga Dass, after we had decided that we were to make an attempt to get away that very night. It was weary work waiting throughout the afternoon.

About ten o'clock, as far as I could judge, when the Moon had just risen above the lip of the crater, Gunga Dass made a move for his burrow to bring out the gun-barrels whereby to measure our path. All the other wretched inhabitants had retired to their lairs long ago. The guardian boat drifted downstream some hours before, and we were utterly alone by the crow-clump. Gunga Dass, while carrying the gun-barrels, let slip the piece of paper which was to be our guide. I stooped down hastily to recover it, and, as I did so, I was aware that the diabolical Brahmin was aiming a violent blow at the back of my head with the gun-barrels. It was too late to turn round. I must have received the blow somewhere on the nape of my neck. A hundred thousand fiery stars danced before

my eyes, and I fell forward senseless at the edge of the quicksand.

When I recovered consciousness, the Moon was going down, and I was sensible of intolerable pain in the back of my head. Gunga Dass had disappeared and my mouth was full of blood. I lay down again and prayed that I might die without more ado. Then the unreasoning fury which I have before mentioned laid hold upon me, and I staggered inland towards the walls of the crater. It seemed that some one was calling to me in a whisper —"Sahib! Sahib! Sahib!" exactly as my bearer used to call me in the mornings. I fancied that I was delirious until a handful of sand fell at my feet. Then I looked up and saw a head peering down into the amphitheater—the head of Dunnoo, my dog-boy, who attended to my collies. As soon as he had attracted my attention, he held up his hand and showed a rope. I motioned, staggering to and fro the while, that he should throw it down. It was a couple of leather punkah-ropes knotted together, with a loop at one end. I slipped the loop over my head and under my arms; heard Dunnoo urge something forward; was conscious that I was being dragged, face downward, up the steep sand slope, and the next instant found myself choked and half fainting on the sand hills overlooking the crater. Dunnoo, with his face ashy gray in the moonlight, implored me not to stay but to get back to my tent at once.

It seems that he had tracked Pornic's footprints fourteen miles across the sands to the crater; had returned and told my servants, who flatly refused to meddle with any one, white or black, once fallen into the hideous Village of the Dead; whereupon Dunnoo had taken one of my ponies and a couple of punkah ropes, returned to the crater, and hauled me out as I have described.

To cut a long story short, Dunnoo is now my personal servant on a gold mohur a month —a sum which I still think far too little for the services he has rendered. Nothing on earth will induce me to go near that devilish spot again, or to reveal its whereabouts more clearly than I have done. Of Gunga Dass I have never found a trace, nor do I wish to do. My sole motive in giving this to be published is the hope that some one may possibly identify, from the details and the inventory which I have given above, the corpse of the man in the olive-green hunting-suit.

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING.

"Brother to a Prince and fellow to a beggar if he be found worthy."

THE Law, as quoted, lays down a fair conduct of life, and one not easy to follow. I have been fellow to a beggar again and again under circumstances which prevented either of us finding out whether the other was worthy. I have still to be brother to a Prince, though I once came near to kinship with what might have been a veritable King and was promised the reversion of a Kingdom—army, law-courts, revenue and policy all complete. But, to-day, I greatly fear that my King is dead, and if I want a crown I must go and hunt it for myself.

The beginning of everything was in a railway train upon the road to Mhow from Ajmir. There had been a Deficit in the Budget, which necessitated traveling, not Second-class, which is only half as dear as First-class, but by Intermediate, which is very awful indeed. There are no cushions in the Intermediate-class, and the population are either Intermediate, which is Eurasian, or native, which for a long night journey is nasty, or Loafer, which is amusing though intoxicated. Inter-

mediates do not patronize refreshment-rooms. They carry their food in bundles and pots, and buy sweets from the native sweetmeat-sellers, and drink the roadside water. That is why in the hot weather Intermediates are taken out of the carriages dead, and in all weathers are most properly looked down upon.

My particular Intermediate happened to be empty till I reached Nasirabad, when a huge gentleman in shirt-sleeves entered and following the custom of Intermediates, passed the time of day. He was a wanderer and a vagabond like myself, but with an educated taste for whisky. He told tales of things he had seen and done, of out-of-the-way corners of the Empire into which he had penetrated, and of adventures in which he risked his life for a few days' food. "If India was filled with men like you and me, not knowing more than the crows where they'd get their next day's rations, it isn't seventy millions of revenue the land would be paying—it's seven hundred millions," said he; and as I looked at his mouth and chin I was disposed to agree with him. We talked politics—the politics of Loaferdom that sees things from the underside where the lath and plaster is not smoothed off—and we talked postal arrangements because my friend wanted to send a telegram back from the next station to Ajmir, which is the turning-off place from the Bombay to the Mhow line as you travel westward. My friend had no money beyond eight annas which he

wanted for dinner, and I had no money at all, owing to the hitch in the Budget before mentioned. Further, I was going into a wilderness where, though I should resume touch with the Treasury, there were no telegraph offices. I was, therefore, unable to help him in any way.

"We might threaten a Station-master, and make him send a wire on tick," said my friend, "but that'd mean inquiries for you and for me, and I've got my hands full these days. Did you say you are traveling back along this line within any days?"

"Within ten," I said.

"Can't you make it eight?" said he. "Mine is rather urgent business."

"I can send your telegram within ten days if that will serve you," I said.

"I couldn't trust the wire to fetch him now I think of it. It's this way. He leaves Delhi on the 23d for Bombay. That means he'll be running through Ajmir about the night of the 23d."

"But I'm going into the Indian Desert," I explained.

"Well *and* good," said he. "You'll be changing at Marwar Junction to get into Jodhpore territory—you must do that and he'll be coming through Marwar junction in the early morning of the 24th by the Bombay Mail. Can you be at Marwar Junction on that time? 'Twon't be inconveniencing you because I know that there's precious few pickings to be got out of these Central India States—even

though you pretend to be correspondent of the *Backwoodsman*."

"Have you ever tried that trick?" I asked.

"Again and again, but the Residents find you out, and then you get escorted to the Border before you've time to get your knife into them. But about my friend here. I *must* give him a word o' mouth to tell him what's come to me or else he won't know where to go. I would take it more than kind of you if you was to come out of Central India in time to catch him at Marwar Junction, and say to him:—'He has gone South for the week.' He'll know what that means. He's a big man with a red beard, and a great swell he is. You'll find him sleeping like a gentleman with all his luggage round him in a Second-class compartment. But don't you be afraid. Slip down the window, and say:—'He has gone South for the week,' and he'll tumble. It's only cutting your time of stay in those parts by two days. I ask you as a stranger—going to the West," he said with emphasis.

"Where have *you* come from?" said I.

"From the East," said he, "and I am hoping that you will give him the message on the Square—for the sake of my Mother as well as your own."

Englishmen are not usually softened by appeals to the memory of their mothers, but for certain reasons, which will be fully apparent, I saw fit to agree.

"It's more than a little matter," said he,

"and that's why I ask you to do it—and now I know that I can depend on you doing it. A Second-class carriage at Marwar Junction, and a red-haired man asleep in it. You'll be sure to remember. I get out at the next station, and I must hold on there till he comes or sends me what I want."

"I'll give the message if I catch him," I said, "and for the sake of your Mother as well as mine I'll give you a word of advice. Don't try to run the Central India States just now as the correspondent of the *Backwoodsman*. There's a real one knocking about here, and it might lead to trouble."

"Thank you," said he simply, "and when will the swine be gone? I can't starve because he's ruining my work. I wanted to get hold of the Degumber Rajah down here about his father's widow, and give him a jump."

"What did he do to his father's widow, then?"

"Filled her up with red pepper and slippered her to death as she hung from a beam. I found that out myself and I'm the only man that would dare going into the State to get hush-money for it. They'll try to poison me, same as they did in Chortumna when I went on the loot there. But you'll give the man at Marwar Junction my message?"

He got out at a little roadside station, and I reflected. I had heard, more than once, of men personating correspondents of newspapers and bleeding small Native States with

threats of exposure, but I had never met any of the caste before. They lead a hard life, and generally die with great suddenness. The Native States have a wholesome horror of English newspapers, which may throw light on their peculiar methods of government, and do their best to choke correspondents with champagne, or drive them out of their mind with four-in-hand barouches. They do not understand that nobody cares a straw for the internal administration of Native States so long as oppression and crime are kept within decent limits, and the ruler is not drugged, drunk, or diseased from one end of the year to the other. Native States were created by Providence in order to supply picturesque scenery, tigers, and tall-writing. They are the dark places of the earth, full of unimaginable cruelty, touching the Railway and the Telegraph on one side, and, on the other, the days of Harun-al-Raschid. When I left the train I did business with divers Kings, and in eight days passed through many changes of life. Sometimes I wore dress-clothes and consorted with Princes and Politicals, drinking from crystal and eating from silver. Sometimes I lay out upon the ground and devoured what I could get, from a plate made of a flapjack, and drank the running water, and slept under the same rug as my servant. It was all in the day's work.

Then I headed for the Great Indian Desert upon the proper date, as I had promised, and

the night Mail set me down at Marwar Junction, where a funny little, happy-go-lucky, native-managed railway runs to Jodhpore. The Bombay Mail from Delhi makes a short halt at Marwar. She arrived as I got in, and I had just time to hurry to her platform and go down the carriages. There was only one Second-class on the train. I slipped the window and looked down upon a flaming red beard, half covered by a railway rug. That was my man, fast asleep, and I dug him gently in the ribs. He woke with a grunt and I saw his face in the light of the lamps. It was a great and shining face.

"Tickets again?" said he.

"No," said I. "I am to tell you that he is gone South for the week. He is gone South for the week!"

The train had begun to move out. The red man rubbed his eyes. "He has gone South for the week," he repeated. "Now that's just like his impidence. Did he say that I was to give you anything?—'Cause I won't."

"He didn't," I said and dropped away, and watched the red lights die out in the dark. It was horribly cold because the wind was blowing off the sands. I climbed into my own train—not an Intermediate Carriage this time—and went to sleep.

If the man with the beard had given me a rupee I should have kept it as a memento of a rather curious affair. But the consciousness of having done my duty was my only reward.

Later on I reflected that two gentlemen like my friends could not do any good if they foregathered and personated correspondents of newspapers, and might, if they "stuck up" one of the little rat-trap states of Central India or Southern Rajputana, get themselves into serious difficulties. I therefore took some trouble to describe them as accurately as I could remember to people who would be interested in deporting them: and succeeded, so I was later informed, in having them headed back from the Degumber borders.

Then I became respectable, and returned to an office where there were no Kings and no incidents except the daily manufacture of a newspaper. A newspaper office seems to attract every conceivable sort of person, to the prejudice of discipline. Zenana-mission ladies arrive, and beg that the Editor will instantly abandon all his duties to describe a Christian prize-giving in a back-slum of a perfectly inaccessible village; Colonels who have been overpassed for commands sit down and sketch the outline of a series of ten, twelve, or twenty-four leading articles on Seniority *versus* Selection; missionaries wish to know why they have not been permitted to escape from their regular vehicles of abuse and swear at a brother-missionary under special patronage of the editorial We; stranded theatrical companies troop up to explain that they cannot pay for their advertisements, but on their return from New Zealand or Tahiti will do so

with interest; inventors of patent punkah-pulling machines, carriage couplings and unbreakable swords and axle-trees call with specifications in their pockets and hours at their disposal; tea-companies enter and elaborate their prospectuses with the office pens; secretaries of ball-committees clamor to have the glories of their last dance more fully expounded; strange ladies rustle in and say:—I want a hundred lady's cards printed *at once*, please," which is manifestly part of an Editor's duty; and every dissolute ruffian that ever tramped the Grand Trunk Road makes it his business to ask for employment as a proof-reader. And, all the time, the telephone-bell is ringing madly, and Kings are being killed on the Continent, and Empires are saying—"You're another," and Mister Gladstone is calling down brimstone upon the British Dominions, and the little black copy-boys are whining, "*kaa-pi-chay-ha-yeh*" (copy wanted) like tired bees, and most of the paper is as blank as Modrek's shield.

But that is the amusing part of the year. There are other six months wherein none ever come to call, and the thermometer walks inch by inch up to the top of the glass, and the office is darkened to just above reading-light, and the press machines are red-hot of touch, and nobody writes anything but accounts of amusements in the Hill-stations or obituary notices. Then the telephone becomes a tinkling terror, because it tells you of the sudden

deaths of men and women that you knew intimately, and the prickly-heat covers you as with a garment, and you sit down and write :—"A slight increase of sickness is reported from the Khuda Janta Khan District. The outbreak is purely sporadic in its nature, and, thanks to the energetic efforts of the District authorities, is now almost at an end. It is, however, with deep regret we record the death, etc."

Then the sickness really breaks out, and the less recording and reporting the better for the peace of the subscribers. But the Empires and the Kings continue to divert themselves as selfishly as before, and the Foreman thinks that a daily paper really ought to come out once in twenty-four hours, and all the people at the Hill-stations in the middle of their amusements say :—"Good gracious! Why can't the paper be sparkling? I'm sure there's plenty going on up here."

That is the dark half of the moon, and, as the advertisements say, "must be experienced to be appreciated."

It was in that season, and a remarkably evil season, that the paper began running the last issue of the week on Saturday night, which is to say Sunday morning, after the custom of a London paper. This was a great convenience, for immediately after the paper was put to bed, the dawn would lower the thermometer from 96° to almost 84° for half

an hour, and in that chill—you have no idea how cold is 84° on the grass until you begin to pray for it—a very tired man could set off to sleep ere the heat roused him.

One Saturday night it was my pleasant duty to put the paper to bed alone. A King or courtier or a courtesan or a community was going to die or get a new Constitution, or do something that was important on the other side of the world, and the paper was to be held open till the latest possible minute in order to catch the telegram. It was a pitchy black night, as stifling as a June night can be, and the *loo*, the red-hot wind from the westward, was booming among the tinder-dry trees and pretending that the rain was on its heels. Now and again a spot of almost boiling water would fall on the dust with the flop of a frog, but all our weary world knew that was only pretense. It was a shade cooler in the press-room than the office, so I sat there, while the type ticked and clicked, and the night-jars hooted at the windows, and the all but naked compositors wiped the sweat from their foreheads and called for water. The thing that was keeping us back, whatever it was, would not come off, though the *loo* dropped and the last type was set, and the whole round earth stood still in the choking heat, with its finger on its lip, to wait the event. I drowsed, and wondered whether the telegraph was a blessing, and whether this dying man, or struggling people, was

aware of the inconvenience the delay was causing. There was no special reason beyond the heat and worry to make tension, but, as the clock-hands crept up to three o'clock and the machines spun their fly-wheels two and three times to see that all was in order, before I said the word that would set them off, I could have shrieked aloud.

Then the roar and rattle of the wheels shivered the quiet into little bits. I rose to go away, but two men in white clothes stood in front of me. The first one said:—"It's him!" The second said:—"So it is!" And they both laughed almost as loudly as the machinery roared, and mopped their foreheads. "We see there was a light burning across the road and we were sleeping in that ditch there for coolness, and I said to my friend here, 'The office is open. Let's come along and speak to him as turned us back from the Degumber State," said the smaller of the two. He was the man I had met in the Mhow train, and his fellow was the red-bearded man of Marwar Junction. There was no mistaking the eyebrows of the one or the beard of the other.

I was not pleased, because I wished to go to sleep, not to squabble with loafers. "What do you want?" I asked.

"Half an hour's talk with you cool and comfortable, in the office," said the red-bearded man. "We'd *like* some drink—the Contrack doesn't begin yet, Peachey, so you

needn't look—but what we really want is advice. We don't want money. We ask you as a favor, because you did us a bad turn about Degumber."

I led from the press-room to the stifling office with the maps on the walls, and the red-haired man rubbed his hands. "That's something like," said he. "This was the proper shop to come to. Now, Sir, let me introduce to you Brother Peachey Carnehan, that's him, and Brother Daniel Dravot, that is *me*, and the less said about our professions the better, for we have been most things in our time. Soldier, sailor, compositor, photographer, proof-reader, street-preacher, and correspondents of the *Backwoodsman* when we thought the paper wanted one. Carnehan is sober, and so am I. Look at us first and see that's sure. It will save you cutting into my talk. We'll take one of your cigars apiece, and you shall see us light."

I watched the test. The men were absolutely sober, so I gave them each a tepid peg.

"Well *and* good," said Carnehan of the eyebrows, wiping the froth from his mustache. "Let me talk now, Dan. We have been all over India, mostly on foot. We have been boiler-fitters, engine-drivers, petty contractors, and all that, and we have decided that India isn't big enough for such as us."

They certainly were too big for the office.

Dravot's beard seemed to fill half the room and Carnehan's shoulders the other half, as they sat on the big table. Carnehan continued:—"The country isn't half worked out because they that governs it won't let you touch it. They spend all their blessed time in governing it, and you can't lift a spade, nor chip a rock, nor look for oil, nor anything like that without all the government saying—'Leave it alone and let us govern.' Therefore, such as it is, we will let it alone, and go away to some other place where a man isn't crowded and can come to his own. We are not little men, and there is nothing that we are afraid of except Drink, and we have signed a Contrack on that. *Therefore*, we are going away to be Kings."

"Kings in our own right," muttered Dravot.

"Yes, of course," I said. "You've been tramping in the sun, and it's a very warm night, and hadn't you better sleep over the notion? Come to-morrow."

"Neither drunk nor sunstruck," said Dravot. "We have slept over the notion half a year, and require to see Books and Atlases, and we have decided that there is only one place now in the world that two strong men can Sar-a-*whack*. They call it Kafiristan. By my reckoning it's the top right-hand corner of Afghanistan, not more than three hundred miles from Peshawar. They have two and thirty heathen idols

there, and we'll be the thirty-third. It's a mountaineous country, and the women of those parts are very beautiful."

"But that is provided against in the Contrack," said Carnehan. "Neither Women nor Liqu-or, Daniel."

"And that's all we know, except that no one has gone there, and they fight, and in any place where they fight a man who knows how to drill men can always be a King. We shall go to those parts and say to any King we find—'D' you want to vanquish your foes?' and we will show him how to drill men; for that we know better than anything else. Then we will subvert that King and seize his throne and establish a Dy-nasty."

"You'll be cut to pieces before you're fifty miles across the Border," I said. "You have to travel through Afghanistan to get to that country. It's one mass of mountains and peaks and glaciers, and no Englishman has been through it. The people are utter brutes, and even if you reached them you couldn't do anything."

"That's more like," said Carnehan. "If you could think us a little more mad we would be more pleased. We have come to you to know about this country, to read a book about it, and to be shown maps. We want you to tell us that we are fools and to show us your books." He turned to the book-cases.

"Are you at all in earnest?" I said.

"A little," said Dravot sweetly. "As big a map as you have got, even if it's all blank where Kafiristan is, and any books you've got. We can read, though we aren't very educated."

I uncased the big thirty-two-miles-to-the-inch map of India, and two smaller Frontier maps, hauled down volume INF-KAN of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and the men consulted them.

"See here!" said Dravot, his thumb on the map. "Up to Jagdallak, Peachey and me know the road. We was there with Roberts's Army. We'll have to turn off to the right at Jagdallak through Laghmann territory. Then we get among the hills—fourteen thousand feet—fifteen thousand—it will be cold work there, but it don't look very far on the map."

I handed him Wood on the *Sources of the Oxus*. Carnehan was deep in the *Encyclopædia*.

"They're a mixed lot," said Dravot reflectively; "and it won't help us to know the names of their tribes. The more tribes the more they'll fight, and the better for us. From Jagdallak to Ashang. H'mm!"

"But all the information about the country is as sketchy and inaccurate as can be," I protested. "No one knows anything about it really. Here's the file of the *United Services' Institute*. Read what Bellew says."

"Blow Bellew!" said Carnehan. "Dan,

they're an all-fired lot of heathens, but this book here says they think they're related to us English."

I smoked while the men pored over *Raverty*, *Wood*, the maps and the *Encyclopædia*.

"There is no use your waiting," said Dravot politely. "It's about four o'clock now. We'll go before six o'clock if you want to sleep, and we won't steal any of the papers. Don't you sit up. We're two harmless lunatics, and if you come, to-morrow evening, down to the Serai we'll say good-by to you."

"You *are* two fools," I answered. "You'll be turned back at the Frontier or cut up the minute you set foot in Afghanistan. Do you want any money or a recommendation down-country? I can help you to the chance of work next week."

"Next week we shall be hard at work ourselves, thank you," said Dravot. "It isn't so easy being a King as it looks. When we've got our Kingdom in going order we'll let you know, and you can come up and help us to govern it."

"Would two lunatics make a Contrack like that?" said Carnehan, with subdued pride, showing me a greasy half-sheet of note-paper on which was written the following. I copied it, then and there, as a curiosity:—

This Contract between me and you persuing witnesseth in the name of God—Amen and so forth.

(*One*) *That me and you will settle this matter together:* i. e., *to be Kings of Kafiristan.*

(*Two*) *That you and me will not, while this matter is being settled, look at any Liquor, nor any Woman black, white or brown, so as to get mixed up with one or the other harmful.*

(*Three*) *That we conduct ourselves with dignity and discretion, and if one of us gets into trouble the other will stay by him.*

Signed by you and me this day.
Peachey Taliaferro Carnehan.
Daniel Dravot.
Both Gentlemen at Lagre.

"There was no need for the last article," said Carnehan, blushing modestly; "but it looks regular. Now you know the sort of men that loafers are—we *are* loafers, Dan, until we get out of India—and *do* you think that we would sign a Contrack like that unless we was in earnest? We have kept away from the two things that make life worth having."

"You won't enjoy your lives much longer if you are going to try this idiotic adventure. Don't set the office on fire," I said, "and go away before nine o'clock."

I left them still poring over the maps and making notes on the back of the "Contrack." "Be sure to come down to the Serai to-morrow," were their parting words.

The Kumharsen Serai is the great four-square sink of humanity where the strings of camels and horses from the North load and unload. All the nationalities of Central Asia may be found there, and most of the folk of India proper. Balkh and Bokhara there meet Bengal and Bombay, and try to draw eye-teeth. You can buy ponies, turquoises. Persian pussy-cats, saddle-bags, fat-tailed sheep and musk in the Kumharsen Serai, and get many strange things for nothing. In the afternoon I went down there to see whether my friends intended to keep their word or were lying about drunk.

A priest attired in fragments of ribbons and rags stalked up to me, gravely twisting a child's paper whirligig. Behind him was his servant bending under the load of a crate of mud toys. The two were loading up two camels, and the inhabitants of the Serai watched them with shrieks of laughter.

"The priest is mad," said a horse-dealer to me. "He is going up to Kabul to sell toys to the Amir. He will either be raised to honor or have his head cut off. He came in here this morning and has been behaving madly ever since."

"The witless are under the protection of God," stammered a flat-cheeked Usberg in broken Hindi. "They foretell future events."

"Would they could have foretold that my caravan would have been cut up by the Shinwaris almost within shadow of the Pass!"

grunted the Eusufzai agent of a Rajputana trading-house whose goods had been feloniously diverted into the hands of other robbers just across the Border, and whose misfortunes were the laughing-stock of the bazar. "Ohé, priest, whence come you and whither do you go?"

"From Roum have I come," shouted the priest, waving his whirligig; "from Roum, blown by the breath of a hundred devils across the sea! O thieves, robbers, liars, the blessing of Pir Khan on pigs, dogs, and perjurers! Who will take the Protected of God to the North to sell charms that are never still to the Amir? The camels shall not gall, the sons shall not fall sick, and the wives shall remain faithful while they are away, of the men who give me place in their caravan. Who will assist me to slipper the King of the Roos with a golden slipper with a silver heel? The protection of Pir Khan be upon his labors!" He spread out the skirts of his gaberdine and pirouetted between the lines of tethered horses.

"There starts a caravan from Peshawar to Kabul in twenty days, *Huzrut*," said the Eusufzai trader. "My camels go therewith. Do thou also go and bring us good-luck."

"I will go even now!" shouted the priest. "I will depart upon my winged camels, and be at Peshawar in a day! Ho! Hazar Mir Khan," he yelled to his servant, "drive out the camels, but let me first mount my own."

He leaped on the back of his beast as it knelt, and, turning round to me, cried:—"Come thou also, Sahib, a little along the road, and I will sell thee a charm—an amulet that shall make thee King of Kafiristan."

Then the light broke upon me, and I followed the two camels out of the Serai, till we reached open road and the priest halted.

"What d' you think o' that?" said he in English. "Carnehan can't talk their patter, so I've made him my servant. He makes a handsome servant. 'Tisn't for nothing that I've been knocking about the country for fourteen years. Didn't I do that talk neat? We'll hitch on to a caravan at Peshawar till we get to Jagdallak, and then we'll see if we can get donkeys for our camels, and strike into Kafiristan. Whirligigs for the Amir, O Lor! Put your hand under the camel-bags and tell me what you feel."

I felt the butt of a Martini, and another and another.

"Twenty of 'em," said Dravot placidly. "Twenty of 'em, and ammunition to correspond, under the whirligigs and the mud dolls."

"Heaven help you if you are caught with those things!" I said. "A Martini is worth her weight in silver among the Pathans."

"Fifteen hundred rupees of capital—every rupee we could beg, borrow, or steal—are invested on these two camels," said Dravot. We won't get caught. We're going through

the Khaiber with a regular caravan. Who'd touch a poor mad priest?"

"Have you got everything you want?" I asked, overcome with astonishment.

"Not yet, but we shall soon. Give me a memento of your kindness, *Brother*. You did me a service yesterday, and that time in Marwar. Half my Kingdom shall you have, as the saying is." I slipped a small charm compass from my watch-chain and handed it up to the priest.

"Good-by," said Dravot, giving me his hand cautiously. "It's the last time we'll shake hands with an Englishman these many days. Shake hands with him, Carnehan," he cried, as the second camel passed me.

Carnehan leaned down and shook hands.

Then the camels passed away along the dusty road, and I was left alone to wonder. My eye could detect no failure in the disguises. The scene in the Serai attested that they were complete to the native mind. There was just the chance, therefore, that Carnehan and Dravot would be able to wander through Afghanistan without detection. But, beyond, they would find death, certain and awful death.

Ten days later a native friend of mine, giving me the news of the day from Peshawar, wound up his letter with:—"There has been much laughter here on account of a certain mad priest who is going in his estimation to sell petty gauds and insignificant trinkets

which he ascribes as great charms to H. H. the Amir of Bokhara. He passed through Peshawar and associated himself to the Second Summer caravan that goes to Kabul. The merchants are pleased because through superstition they imagine that such mad fellows bring good-fortune."

The two, then, were beyond the Border. I would have prayed for them, but, that night, a real King died in Europe, and demanded an obituary notice.

. . . . .

The wheel of the world swings through the same phases again and again. Summer passed and winter thereafter, and came and passed again. The daily paper continued and I with it, and upon the third summer there fell a hot night, a night-issue, and a strained waiting for something to be telegraphed from the other side of the world, exactly as had happened before. A few great men had died in the past two years, the machines worked with more clatter, and some of the trees in the Office garden were a few feet taller. But that was all the difference.

I passed over to the press-room, and went through just such a scene as I have already described. The nervous tension was stronger than it had been two years before, and I felt the heat more acutely. At three o'clock I cried, "Print off," and turned to go, when there crept to my chair what was left of a man. He was bent into a circle, his head was

sunk between his shoulders, and he moved his feet one over the other like a bear. I could hardly see whether he walked or crawled—this rag-wrapped, whining cripple who addressed me by name, crying that he was come back. "Can you give me a drink?" he whimpered. "For the Lord's sake, give me a drink!"

I went back to the office, the man following with groans of pain, and I turned up the lamp.

"Don't you know me?" he gasped, dropping into a chair, and he turned his drawn face, surmounted by a shock of gray hair, to the light.

I looked at him intently. Once before had I seen eyebrows that met over the nose in an inch-broad black band, but for the life of me I could not tell where.

"I don't know you," I said, handing him the whisky. "What can I do for you?"

He took a gulp of the spirit raw, and shivered in spite of the suffocating heat.

"I've come back," he repeated; "and I was the King of Kafiristan—me and Dravot—crowned Kings we was! In this office we settled it—you setting there and giving us the books. I am Peachey—Peachey Talia ferro Carnehan, and you've been setting here ever since—O Lord!"

I was more than a little astonished, and expressed my feelings accordingly.

"It's true," said Carnehan, with a dry cackle, nursing his feet, which were wrapped

in rags. "True as gospel. Kings we were, with crowns upon our heads—me and Dravot—poor Dan—oh, poor, poor Dan, that would never take advice, not though I begged of him!"

"Take the whisky," I said, "and take your own time. Tell me all you can recollect of everything from beginning to end. You got across the border on your camels, Dravot dressed as a mad priest and you his servant. Do you remember that?"

"I ain't mad—yet, but I shall be that way soon. Of course I remember. Keep looking at me, or maybe my words will go all to pieces. Keep looking at me in my eyes and don't say anything."

I leaned forward and looked into his face as steadily as I could. He dropped one hand upon the table and I grasped it by the wrist. It was twisted like a bird's claw, and upon the back was a ragged, red, diamond-shaped scar.

"No, don't look there. Look at *me*," said Carnehan.

"That comes afterwards, but for the Lord's sake don't distrack me. We left with that caravan, me and Dravot playing all sorts of antics to amuse the people we were with. Dravot used to make us laugh in the evenings when all the people was cooking their dinners—cooking their dinners, and . . . . what did they do then? They lit little fires with sparks that went into Dravot's beard, and we all

laughed—fit to die. Little red fires they was, going into Dravot's big red beard—so funny." His eyes left mine and he smiled foolishly.

"You went as far as Jagdallak with that caravan," I said at a venture, "after you had lit those fires. To Jagdallak, where you turned off to try to get into Kafiristan."

"No, we didn't neither. What are you talking about? We turned off before Jagdallak, because we heard the roads was good. But they wasn't good enough for our two camels—mine and Dravot's. When we left the caravan, Dravot took off all his clothes and mine too, and said we would be heathen, because the Kafirs didn't allow Mohammedans to talk to them. So we dressed betwixt and between, and such a sight as Daniel Dravot I never saw yet nor expect to see again. He burned half his beard, and slung a sheepskin over his shoulder, and shaved his head into patterns. He shaved mine, too, and made me wear outrageous things to look like a heathen. That was in a most mountaineous country, and our camels couldn't go along any more because of the mountains. They were tall and black, and coming home I saw them fight like wild goats—there are lots of goats in Kafiristan. And these mountains, they never keep still, no more than the goats. Always fighting they are, and don't let you sleep at night."

"Take some more whisky," I said very slowly. "What did you and Daniel Dravot do when the camels could go no further

because of the rough roads that led into Kafiristan?"

"What did which do? There was a party called Peachey Taliaferro Carnehan that was with Dravot. Shall I tell you about him? He died out there in the cold. Slap from the bridge fell old Peachey, turning and twisting in the air like a penny whirligig that you can sell to the Amir.—No; they was two for three ha'pence, those whirligigs, or I am much mistaken and woful sore. And then these camels were no use, and Peachey said to Dravot—'For the Lord's sake, let's get out of this before our heads are chopped off,' and with that they killed the camels all among the mountains, not having anything in particular to eat, but first they took off the boxes with the guns and the ammunition, till two men came along driving four mules. Dravot up and dances in front of them, singing,—'Sell me four mules.' Says the first man,—'If you are rich enough to buy, you are rich enough to rob;' but before ever he could put his hand to his knife, Dravot breaks his neck over his knee, and the other party runs away. So Carnehan loaded the mules with the rifles that was taken off the camels, and together we starts forward into those bitter cold mountaineous parts, and never a road broader than the back of your hand."

He paused for a moment, while I asked him if he could remember the nature of the country through which he had journeyed.

"I am telling you as straight as I can, but my head isn't as good as it might be. They drove nails through it to make me hear better how Dravot died. The country was mountaineous and the mules were most contrary, and the inhabitants was dispersed and solitary. They went up and up, and down and down, and that other party, Carnehan, was imploring of Dravot not to sing and whistle so loud, for fear of bringing down the tremenjus avalanches. But Dravot says that if a King couldn't sing it wasn't worth being King, and whacked the mules over the rump, and never took no heed for ten cold days. We came to a big level valley all among the mountains, and the mules were near dead, so we killed them, not having anything in special for them or us to eat. We sat upon the boxes, and played odd and even with the cartridges that was jolted out.

"Then ten men with bows and arrows ran down that valley, chasing twenty men with bows and arrows, and the row was tremenjus. They was fair men—fairer than you or me—with yellow hair and remarkable well built. Says Dravot, unpacking the guns—'This is the beginning of the business. We'll fight for the ten men,' and with that he fires two rifles at the twenty men, and drops one of them at two hundred yards from the rock where we was sitting. The other men began to run, but Carnehan and Dravot sits on the boxes picking them off at all ranges, up and down the

valley. Then we goes up to the ten men that had run across the snow too, and they fires a footy little arrow at us. Dravot he shoots above their heads and they all falls down flat. Then he walks over them and kicks them, and then he lifts them up and shakes hands all round to make them friendly like. He calls them and gives them the boxes to carry, and waves his hand for all the world as though he was King already. They takes the boxes and him across the valley and up the hill into a pine wood on the top, where there was half a dozen big stone idols. Dravot he goes to the biggest—a fellow they call Imbra—and lays a rifle and a cartridge at his feet, rubbing his nose respectful with his own nose, patting him on the head, and saluting in front of it. He turns round to the men and nods his head. and says,—'That's all right. I'm in the know too, and all these old jim-jams are my friends.' Then he opens his mouth and points down it, and when the first man brings him food, he says—'No;' and when the second man brings him food, he says—'No;' but when one of the old priests and the boss of the village brings him food, he says—'Yes;' very haughty, and eats it slow. That was how we came to our first village, without any trouble, just as though we had tumbled from the skies. But we tumbled from one of those damned rope-bridges, you see, and you couldn't expect a man to laugh much after that."

"Take some more whisky and go on," I

said. "That was the first village you came into. How did you get to be King?"

"I wasn't King," said Carnehan. "Dravot he was the King, and a handsome man he looked with the gold crown on his head and all. Him and the other party stayed in that village, and every morning Dravot sat by the side of old Imbra, and the people came and worshiped. That was Dravot's order. Then a lot of men came into the valley, and Carnehan and Dravot picks them off with the rifles before they knew where they was, and runs down into the valley and up again the other side, and finds another village, same as the first one, and the people all falls down flat on their faces and Dravot says,—'Now what is the trouble between you two villages?' and the people points to a woman, as fair as you or me, that was carried off, and Dravot takes her back to the first village and counts up the dead—eight there was. For each dead man Dravot pours a little milk on the ground and waves his arms like a whirligig and 'That's all right,' says he. Then he and Carnehan takes the big boss of each village by the arm and walks them down into the valley, and shows them how to scratch a line with a spear right down the valley, and gives each a sod of turf from both sides o' the line. Then all the people comes down and shouts like the devil and all, and Dravot says,—'Go and dig the land, and be fruitful and multiply,' which they did, though they didn't understand. Then

we asks the names of things in their lingo—bread and water and fire and idols and such, and Dravot leads the priest of each village up to the idol, and says he must sit there and judge the people, and if anything goes wrong he is to be shot.

"Next week they was all turning up the land in the valley as quiet as bees and much prettier, and the priests heard all the complaints and told Dravot in dumb show what it was about. 'That's just the beginning,' says Dravot. 'They think we're Gods.' He and Carnehan picks out twenty good men and shows them how to click off a rifle, and form fours, and advance in line, and they was very pleased to do so, and clever to see the hang of it. Then he takes out his pipe and his baccy-pouch and leaves one at one village and one at the other, and off we two goes to see what was to be done in the next valley. That was all rock and there was a little village there, and Carnehan says,—'Send 'em to the old valley to plant,' and takes 'em there and gives 'em some land that wasn't took before. They were a poor lot, and we blooded 'em with a kid before letting 'em into the new Kingdom. That was to impress the people, and then they settled down quiet, and Carnehan went back to Dravot who had got into another valley, all snow and ice and most mountaineous. There was no people there and the Army got afraid, so Dravot shoots one of them, and goes on till he finds some

people in a village, and the Army explains that unless the people wants to be killed they had better not shoot their little matchlocks; for they had matchlocks. We makes friends with the priest and I stays there alone with two of the Army, teaching the men how to drill, and a thundering big Chief comes across the snow with kettle-drums and horns twanging, because he heard there was a new God kicking about. Carnehan sights for the brown of the men half a mile across the snow and wings one of them. Then he sends a message to the Chief that, unless he wishes to be killed, he must come and shake hands with me and leave his arms behind. The Chief comes alone first, and Carnehan shakes hands with him and whirls his arms about, same as Dravot used, and very much surprised that Chief was, and strokes my eyebrows. Then Carnehan goes alone to the Chief, and asks him in dumb show if he had an enemy he hated. 'I have,' says the Chief. So Carnehan weeds out the pick of his men, and sets the two of the Army to show them drill and at the end of two weeks the men can maneuver about as well as Volunteers. So he marches with the Chief to a great big plain on the top of a mountain, and the Chief's men rushes into a village and takes it; we three Martinis firing into the brown of the enemy. So we took that village too, and I gives the Chief a rag from my coat and says, 'Occupy till I come:' which was scriptural. By way of a reminder, when me

and the Army was eighteen hundred yards away, I drops a bullet near him standing on the snow, and all the people falls flat on their faces. Then I sends a letter to Dravot, wherever he be by land or by sea."

At the risk of throwing the creature out of train I interrupted,—"How could you write a letter up yonder?"

"The letter?—Oh!—The letter! Keep looking at me between the eyes, please. It was a string-talk letter, that we'd learned the way of it from a blind begger in the Punjab."

I remember that there had once come to the office a blind man with a knotted twig and a piece of string which he wound round the twig according to some cipher of his own. He could, after the lapse of days or hours, repeat the sentence which he had reeled up. He had reduced the alphabet to eleven primitive sounds; and tried to teach me his method, but failed.

"I sent that letter to Dravot," said Carnehan; "and told him to come back because this Kingdom was growing too big for me to handle, and then I struck for the first valley, to see how the priests were working. They called the village we took along with the Chief, Bashkai, and the first village we took, Er-Heb. The priests at Er-Heb was doing all right, but they had a lot of pending cases about land to show me, and some men from another village had been firing arrows at night; I went out and looked for that village and fired four rounds

at it from a thousand yards. That used all the cartridges I cared to spend, and I waited for Dravot, who had been away two or three months, and I kept my people quiet.

"One morning I heard the devil's own noise of drums and horns, and Dan Dravot marches down the hill with his Army and a tail of hundreds of men, and, which was the most amazing—a great gold crown on his head. 'My Gord, Carnehan,' says Daniel, 'this is a tremenjus business, and we've got the whole country as far as it's worth having. I am the son of Alexander by Queen Semiramis, and you're my younger brother and a God too! It's the biggest thing we've ever seen. I've been marching and fighting for six weeks with the Army, and every footy little village for fifty miles has come in rejoiceful; and more than that, I've got the key of the whole show, as you'll see, and I've got a crown for you! I told 'em to make two of 'em at a place called Shu, where the gold lies in the rock like suet in mutton. Gold I've seen, and turquoise I've kicked out of the cliffs, and there's garnets in the sands of the river, and here's a chunk of amber that a man brought me. Call up all the priests and, here, take your crown.'

"One of the men opens a black hair bag, and I slips the crown on. It was too small and too heavy, but I wore it for the glory. Hammered gold it was—five-pound weight, like a hoop of a barrel.

"'Peachey,' says Dravot, 'we don't want

to fight no more. The Craft's the trick so help me!' and he brings forward, that same Chief that I left at Bashkai—Billy Fish we called him afterwards, because he was so like Billy Fish that drove the big tank-engine at Mach on the Bolan in the old days. 'Shake hands with him,' says Dravot, and I shook hands and nearly dropped, for Billy Fish gave me the Grip. I said nothing, but tried him with the Fellow Craft Grip. He answers, all right, and I tried the Master's Grip, but that was a slip. 'A Fellow Crafts he is!' I says to Dan. 'Does he know the world?' 'He does,' says Dan, 'and all the priests know. It's a miracle! The Chiefs and the priests can work a Fellow Craft Lodge in a way that's very like ours, and they've cut the marks on the rocks, but they don't know the Third Degree, and they've come to find out. It's Gord's Truth. I've known these long years that the Afghans knew up to the Fellow Craft Degree, but this is a miracle. A God and a Grand-Master of the Craft am I, and a Lodge in the Third Degree I will open, and we'll raise the head priests and the Chiefs of the villages.'

"'It's against all the law,' I says, 'holding a Lodge without warrant from any one; and we never held office in any Lodge.'

"'It's a master-stroke of policy,' says Dravot. 'It means running the country as easy as a four-wheeled bogy on a down grade. We can't stop to inquire now, or they'll turn against us. I've forty Chiefs at my heel, and passed and

raised according to their merit they shall be. Billet these men on the villages and see that we run up a Lodge of some kind. The temple of Imbra will do for the Lodge-room. The women must make aprons as you show them. I'll hold a levee of Chiefs to-night and Lodge to-morrow.'

"I was fair run off my legs, but I wasn't such a fool as not to see what a pull this Craft business gave us. I showed the priests' families how to make aprons of the degrees, but for Dravot's apron the blue border and marks was made of turquoise lumps on white hide, not cloth. We took a great square stone in the temple for the Master's chair, and little stones for the officers' chairs, and painted the black pavement with white squares, and did what we could to make things regular.

"At the levee which was held that night on the hillside with big bonfires, Dravot gives out that him and me were Gods and sons of Alexander, and Past Grand-Masters in the Craft, and was come to make Kafiristan a country where every man should eat in peace and drink in quiet, and especially obey us. Then the Chiefs come round to shake hands, and they was so hairy and white and fair it was just shaking hands with old friends. We gave them names according as they was like men we had known in India—Billy Fish, Holly Dilworth, Pikky Kergan that was Bazar-master when I was at Mhow, and so on and so on.

"*The* most amazing miracle was at Lodge next night. One of the old priests was watching us continuous, and I felt uneasy, for I knew we'd have to fudge the Ritual, and I didn't know what the men knew. The old priest was a stranger come in from beyond the village of Bashkai. The minute Dravot puts on the Master's apron that the girls had made for him, the priest fetches a whoop and a howl, and tries to overturn the stone that Dravot was sitting on. 'It's all up now,' I says. 'That comes of meddling with the Craft without warrant!' Dravot never winked an eye, not when ten priests took and tilted over the Grand-Master's chair—which was to say the stone of Imbra. The priest begins rubbing the bottom end of it to clear away the black dirt, and presently he shows all the other priests the Master's Mark, same as was on Dravot's apron, cut into the stone. Not even the priests of the temple of Imbra knew it was there. The old chap falls flat on his face at Dravot's feet and kisses 'em. 'Luck again,' says Dravot, across the Lodge to me, 'they say it's the missing Mark that no one could understand the why of. We're more than safe now.' Then he bangs the butt of his gun for a gavel and says:—'By virtue of the authority vested in me by my own right hand and the help of Peachey, I declare myself Grand-Master of all Freemasonry in Kafiristan in this the Mother Lodge o' the country, and King of Kafiristan equally with Peachey!'

At that he puts on his crown and I puts on mine—I was doing Senior Warden—and we opens the Lodge in most ample form. It was a amazing miracle! The priests moved in Lodge through the first two degrees almost without telling, as if the memory was coming back to them. After that, Peachey and Dravot raised such as was worthy—high priests and Chiefs of far-off villages. Billy Fish was the first, and I can tell you we scared the soul out of him. It was not in any way according to Ritual, but it served our turn. We didn't raise more than ten of the biggest men because we didn't want to make the Degree common. And they was clamoring to be raised.

"'In another six months,' says Dravot, 'we'll hold another Communication and see how you are working.' Then he asks them about their villages, and learns that they was fighting one against the other and were fair sick and tired of it. And when they wasn't doing that they was fighting with the Mohammedans. 'You can fight those when they come into our country,' says Dravot. 'Tell off every tenth man of your tribes for a Frontier guard, and send two hundred at a time to this valley to be drilled. Nobody is going to be shot or speared any more so long as he does well, and I know that you won't cheat me because you're white people—sons of Alexander—and not like common, black Mohammedans. You are *my* people and by God,'

. . . he, running off into English at the end—I'll make a damned fine Nation of you, or I'll die in the making!'

"I can't tell all we did for the next six months because Dravot did a lot I couldn't see the hang of, and he learned their lingo in a way I never could. My work was to help the people plow, and now and again go out with some of the Army and see what the other villages were doing, and make 'em throw rope-bridges across the ravines which cut up the country horrid. Dravot was very kind to me, but when he walked up and down in the pine wood pulling that bloody red beard of his with both fists I knew he was thinking plans I could not advise him about, and I just waited for orders.

"But Dravot never showed me disrespect before the people. They were afraid of me and the Army, but they loved Dan. He was the best of friends with the priests and the Chiefs; but any one could come across the hills with a complaint and Dravot would hear him out fair, and call four priests together and say what was to be done. He used to call in Billy Fish from Bashkai, and Pikky Kergan from Shu, and an old Chief we called Kafuzelum—it was like enough to his real name—and hold councils with 'em when there was any fighting to be done in small villages. That was his Council of War, and the four priests of Bashkai, Shu, Khawak, and Madora was his Privy Council. Between the lot of 'em

they sent me, with forty men and twenty rifles, and sixty men carrying turquoises, into the Ghorband country to buy those hand-made Martini rifles, that come out of the Amir's workshops at Kabul, from one of the Amir's Herati regiments that would have sold the very teeth out of their mouths for turquoises.

"I stayed in Ghorband a month, and gave the Governor there the pick of my baskets for hush-money, and bribed the Colonel of the regiment some more, and, between the two and the tribes-people, we got more than a hundred hand-made Martinis, a hundred good Kohat Jezails that'll throw to six hundred yards, and forty man-loads of very bad ammunition for the rifles. I came back with what I had, and distributed 'em among the men that the Chiefs sent in to me to drill. Dravot was too busy to attend to those things, but the old Army that we first made helped me, and we turned out five hundred men that could drill, and two hundred that knew how to hold arms pretty straight. Even those cork-screwed, hand-made guns was a miracle to them. Dravot talked big about powder-shops and factories, walking up and down in the pine wood when the winter was coming on.

"'I won't make a Nation,' says he. 'I'll make an Empire! These men aren't niggers; they're English! Look at their eyes—look at their mouths. Look at the way they stand up. They sit on chairs in their

own houses. They're the Lost Tribes, or something like it, and they've grown to be English. I'll take a census in the spring if the priests don't get frightened. There must be a fair two million of 'em in these hills. The villages are full o' little children. Two million people—two hundred and fifty thousand fighting men—and all English! They only want the rifles and a little drilling. Two hundred and fifty thousand men, ready to cut in on Russia's right flank when she tries for India! Peachey, man,' he says, chewing his beard in great hunks, 'we shall be Emperors—Emperors of the Earth! Rajah Brooke will be a suckling to us. I'll treat with the Viceroy on equal terms. I'll ask him to send me twelve picked English —twelve that I know of—to help us govern a bit. There's Mackray, Sergeant-pensioner at Segowli — many's the good dinner he's given me, and his wife a pair of trousers. There's Donkin, the Warder of Tounghoo Jail; there's hundreds that I could lay my hand on if I was in India. The Viceroy shall do it for me. I'll send a man through in the spring for those men, and I'll write for a dispensation from the Grand Lodge for what I've done as Grand-Master. That—and all the Sniders that'll be thrown out when the native troops in India take up the Martini. They'll be worn smooth, but they'll do for fighting in these hills. Twelve English, a hundred thousand Sniders run through the

Amir's country in driblets—I'd be content with twenty thousand in one year—and we'd be an Empire. When everything was shipshape, I'd hand over the crown—this crown I'm wearing now—to Queen Victoria on my knees, and she'd say:—"Rise up, Sir Daniel Dravot." Oh, it's big! It's big, I tell you! But there's so much to be done in every place—Bashkai, Khawk, Shu, and everywhere else.'

"'What is it?' I says. 'There are no more men coming in to be drilled this autumn. Look at those fat, black clouds. They're bringing the snow.'

"'It isn't that,' says Daniel, putting his hand very hard on my shoulder; 'and I don't wish to say anything that's against you, for no other living man would have followed me and made me what I am as you have done. You're a first-class Commander-in-Chief, and the people know you; but—it's a big country, and somehow you can't help me, Peachey, in the way I want to be helped.'

"'Go to your blasted priests, then!' I said, and I was sorry when I made that remark, but it did hurt me sore to find Daniel talking so superior when I'd drilled all the men, and done all he told me.

"'Don't let's quarrel, Peachey,' says Daniel without cursing. 'You're a King too, and the half of this Kingdom is yours; but can't you see, Peachey, we want cleverer men than us now—three or four of 'em that we can scatter about for our Deputies. It's a huge-

ous great State, and I can't always tell the right thing to do, and I haven't time for all I want to do, and here's the winter coming on and all.' He put half his beard into his mouth, and it was as red as the gold of his crown.

"'I'm sorry Daniel,' says I. 'I've done all I could. I've drilled the men and shown the people how to stack their oats better; and I've brought in those tinware rifles from Ghorband—but I know what you're driving at. I take it Kings always feel oppressed that way.'

"'There's another thing too,' says Dravot, walking up and down. 'The winter's coming and these people won't be giving much trouble, and if they do we can't move about. I want a wife.'

"'For Gord's sake leave the women alone!' I says. 'We've both got all the work we can, though I *am* a fool. Remember the Contrack, and keep clear o' women.'

"'The Contrack only lasted till such time as we was Kings; and Kings we have been these months past,' says Dravot, weighing his crown in his hand. 'You go get a wife too, Peachey—a nice, strappin', plump girl that'll keep you warm in the winter. They're prettier than English girls, and we can take the pick of 'em. Boil 'em once or twice in hot water, and they'll come as fair as chicken and ham.'

"'Don't tempt me!' I says. 'I will not have any dealings with a woman not till we are

a dam' side more settled than we are now. I've been doing the work o' two men, and you've been doing the work o' three. Let's lie off a bit, and see if we can get some better tobacco from Afghan country and run in some good liquor; but no women.'

"'Who's talking o' *women?*' says Dravot, 'I said *wife*—a Queen to breed a King's son for the King. A Queen out of the strongest tribe, that'll make them your blood-brothers, and that'll lie by your side and tell you all the people thinks about you and their own affairs. That's what I want.'

"'Do you remember that Bengali woman I kept at Mogul Serai when I was a plate-layer?' says I. 'A fat lot o' good she was to me. She taught me the lingo and one or two other things; but what happened? She ran away with the Station Master's servant and half my month's pay. Then she turned up at Dadur Junction in tow of a half-caste, and had the impidence to say I was her husband—all among the drivers in the running shed!'

"'We've done with that,' says Dravot. 'These women are whiter than you or me, and a Queen I will have for the winter months.'

"'For the last time o' asking, Dan, do *not*,' I say. 'It'll only bring us harm. The Bible says that Kings ain't to waste their strength on women, 'specially when they've got a new raw Kingdom to work over.'

"'For the last time of answering I will,' said Dravot, and he went away through the

pine-trees looking like a big red devil. The low sun hit his crown and beard on one side and the two blazed like hot coals.

"But getting a wife was not as easy as Dan thought. He put it before the Council, and there was no answer till Billy Fish said that he'd better ask the girls. Dravot damned them all round. 'What's wrong with me?' he shouts, standing by the idol Imbra. 'Am I a dog or am I not enough of a man for your wenches? Haven't I put the shadow of my hand over this country? Who stopped the last Afghan raid?' It was me really, but Dravot was too angry to remember. 'Who bought your guns? Who repaired the bridges? Who's the Grand-Master of the sign cut in the stone?' and he thumped his hand on the block that he used to sit on in Lodge, and at Council, which opened like Lodge always. Billy Fish said nothing and no more did the others. 'Keep your hair on, Dan,' said I; 'and ask the girls. That's how it's done at Home, and these people are quite English.'

"'The marriage of the King is a matter of State,' says Dan, in a white-hot rage, for he could feel, I hope, that he was going against his better mind. He walked out of the Council-room, and the others sat still, looking at the ground.

"'Billy Fish,' says I to the Chief of Bash-kai, 'what's the difficulty here? A straight answer to a true friend.' 'You know,' says Billy Fish. 'How should a man tell you

who know everything? How can daughters of men marry Gods or Devils? It's not proper.'

"I remembered something like that in the Bible; but if, after seeing us as long as they had, they still believed we were Gods, it wasn't for me to undeceive them.

"'A God can do anything,' says I. 'If the King is fond of a girl he'll not let her die.' 'She'll have to,' said Billy Fish. "There are all sorts of Gods and Devils in these mountains, and now and again a girl marries one of them and isn't seen any more. Besides, you two know the Mark cut in the stone. Only the Gods know that. We thought you were men till you showed the sign of the Master.'

"I wished then that we had explained about the loss of the genuine secrets of a Master-Mason at the first go-off; but I said nothing. All that night there was a blowing of horns in a little dark temple half-way down the hill, and I heard a girl crying fit to die. One of the priests told us that she was being prepared to marry the King.

"'I'll have no nonsense of that kind,' says Dan. 'I don't want to interfere with your customs, but I'll take my own wife.' 'The girl's a little bit afraid,' says the priest. 'She thinks she's going to die, and they are a-heartening of her up down in the temple.'

"'Hearten her very tender, then,' says Dravot, 'or I'll hearten you with the butt of a gun so that you'll never want to be heartened

again.' He licked his lips, did Dan, and stayed up walking about more than half the night, thinking of the wife that he was going to get in the morning. I wasn't any means comfortable, for I knew that dealings with a woman in foreign parts, though you was a crowned King twenty times over, could not but be risky. I got up very early in the morning while Dravot was asleep, and I saw the priests talking together in whispers, and the Chiefs talking together too, and they looked at me out of the corners of their eyes.

"'What is up, Fish?' I says to the Bashkai man, who was wrapped up in his furs and looking splendid to behold.

"'I can't rightly say,' says he; 'but if you can induce the King to drop all this nonsense about marriage, you'll be doing him and me and yourself a great service.'

"'That I do believe,' says I. 'But sure, you know Billy, as well as me, having fought against and for us, that the King and me are nothing more than two of the finest men that God Almighty ever made. Nothing more, I do assure you.'

"'That may be,' says Billy Fish, 'and yet I should be sorry if it was.' He sinks his head upon his great fur cloak for a minute and thinks. 'King,' says he, 'be you man or God or Devil, I'll stick by you to-day. I have twenty of my men with me, and they will follow me. We'll go to Bashkai until the storm blows over.'

"A little snow had fallen in the night, and everything was white except the greasy fat clouds that blew down and down from the north. Dravot came out with his crown on his head, swinging his arms and stamping his feet, and looking more pleased than Punch.

"'For the last time, drop it, Dan,' says I in a whisper. 'Billy Fish here says that there will be a row.'

"'A row among my people!' says Dravot. 'Not much. Peachey, you're a fool not to get a wife too. Where's the girl?' says he with a voice as loud as the braying of a jackass. 'Call up all the Chiefs and priests and let the Emperor see if his wife suits him.'

"There was no need to call any one. They were all there leaning on their guns and spears round the clearing in the center of the pine wood. A deputation of priests went down to the little temple to bring up the girl, and the horns blew up fit to wake the dead. Billy Fish saunters round and gets as close to Daniel as he could, and behind him stood his twenty men with matchlocks. Not a man of them under six feet. I was next to Dravot, and behind me was twenty men of the regular Army. Up comes the girl, and a strapping wench she was, covered with silver and turquoises, but white as death, and looking back every minute at the priests.

"'She'll do,' said Dan, looking her over. 'What's to be afraid of, lass? Come and

kiss me.' He puts his arm round her. She shuts her eyes, gives a bit of a squeak, and down goes her face in the side of Dan's flaming red beard.

"'The slut's bitten me!' says he, clapping his hand to his neck, and, sure, enough, his hand was red with blood. Billy Fish and two of his matchlock-men catches hold of Dan by the shoulders and drags him into the Bashkai lot, while the priests howls in their lingo, —'Neither God nor Devil but a man!' I was all taken aback, for a priest cut at me in front, and the Army behind began firing into the Bashkai men.

"'God A-mighty!' says Dan. 'What is the meaning o' this?'

"'Come back! Come away!' says Billy Fish. 'Ruin and Mutiny is the matter. We'll break for Bashkai if we can.'

"I tried to give some sort of orders to my men—the men o' the regular Army—but it was no use, so I fired into the brown of 'em with an English Martini and drilled three beggars in a line. The valley was full of shouting, howling creatures, and every soul was shrieking 'Not a God nor a Devil but only a man!' The Bashkai troops stuck to Billy Fish all they were worth, but their matchlocks wasn't half as good as the Kabul breech-loaders, and four of them dropped. Dan was bellowing like a bull, for he was very wrathy; and Billy Fish had a hard job to prevent him running out at the crowd.

"'We can't stand,' says Billy Fish. 'Make a run for it down the valley! The whole place is against us.' The matchlock-men ran, and we went down the valley in spite of Dravot's protestations. He was swearing horribly and crying out that he was a King. The priests rolled great stones on us, and the regular Army fired hard, and there wasn't more than six men, not counting Dan, Billy Fish, and Me, that came down to the bottom of the valley alive.

"Then they stopped firing and the horns in the temple blew again. 'Come away—for Gord's sake come away!' says Billy Fish. 'They'll send runners out to all the villages before ever we get to Bashkai. I can protect you there, but I can't do anything now.'

"My own notion is that Dan began to go mad in his head from that hour. He stared up and down like a stuck pig. Then he was all for walking back alone and killing the priests with his bare hands; which he could have done. 'An Emperor am I,' says Daniel, 'and next year I shall be a Knight of the Queen.'

"'All right, Dan,' says I; 'but come along now while there's time.'

"'It's your fault,' says he, 'for not looking after your Army better. There was mutiny in the midst, and you didn't know—you damned engine-driving, plate-laying, missionary's pass-hunting hound!' He sat upon a rock and called me every foul name he could

lay tongue to. I was too heart-sick to care though it was all his foolishness that brought the smash.

"'I'm sorry, Dan,' says I, 'but there's no accounting for natives. This business is our Fifty-Seven. Maybe we'll make something out of it yet, when we've got to Bashkai.'

"'Let's get to Bashkai, then,' says Dan, 'and, by God, when I come back here again I'll sweep the valley so there isn't a bug in a blanket left!'

"We walked all that day, and all that night Dan was stumping up and down on the snow, chewing his beard and muttering to himself.

"'There's no hope o' getting clear,' said Billy Fish. 'The priests will have sent runners to the villages to say that you are only men. Why didn't you stick on as Gods till things was more settled? I'm a dead man,' says Billy Fish, and he throws himself down on the snow and begins to pray to his Gods.

"Next morning we was in a cruel bad country—all up and down, no level ground at all, and no food either. The six Bashkai men looked at Billy Fish hungry-wise as if they wanted to ask something, but they said never a word. At noon we came to the top of a flat mountain all covered with snow, and when we climbed up into it, behold, there was an Army in position waiting in the middle!

"'The runners have been very quick,' says Billy Fish, with a little bit of a laugh. 'They are waiting for us.'

"Three or four men began to fire from the enemy's side, and a chance shot took Daniel in the calf of the leg. That brought him to his senses. He looks across the snow at the Army, and sees the rifles that we had brought into the country.

"'We're done for,' says he. 'They are Englishmen, these people,—and it's my blasted nonsense that has brought you to this. Get back, Billy Fish, and take your men away; you've done what you could, and now cut for it. Carnehan,' says he, 'shake hands with me and go along with Billy. Maybe they won't kill you. I'll go and meet 'em alone. It's me that did it. Me, the King!'

"'Go!' says I. 'Go to Hell, Dan! I'm with you here. Billy Fish, you clear out, and we two will meet those folk.'

"'I'm a Chief,' says Billy Fish, quite quiet. 'I stay with you. My men can go.'

"The Bashkai fellows didn't wait for a second word but ran off, and Dan and Me and Billy Fish walked across to where the drums were drumming and the horns were horning. It was cold—awful cold. I've got that cold in the back of my head now. There's a lump of it there."

The punkah-coolies had gone to sleep. Two kerosene lamps were blazing in the office, and the perspiration poured down my face and splashed on the blotter as I leaned forward. Carnehan was shivering, and I feared that his mind might go. I wiped my

face, took a fresh grip of the piteously mangled hands, and said:—"What happened after that?"

The momentary shift of my eyes had broken the clear current.

"What was you pleased to say?" whined Carnehan. "They took them without any sound. Not a little whisper all along the snow, not though the King knocked down the first man that set hand on him—not though old Peachey fired his last cartridge into the brown of 'em. Not a single solitary sound did those swines make. They just closed up tight, and I tell you their furs stunk. There was a man called Billy Fish, a good friend of us all, and they cut his throat, Sir, then and there, like a pig; and the King kicks up the bloody snow and says:—'We've had a dashed fine run for our money. What's coming next?' But Peachey, Peachey Taliaferro, I tell you, Sir, in confidence as betwixt two friends, he lost his head, Sir. No, he didn't neither. The King lost his head, so he did, all along o' one of those cunning rope-bridges. Kindly let me have the paper-cutter, Sir. It tilted this way. They marched him a mile across that snow to a rope-bridge over a ravine with a river at the bottom. You may have seen such. They prodded him behind like an ox. 'Damn your eyes!' says the King. 'D'you suppose I can't die like a gentleman?' He turns to Peachey—Peachey that was crying like a child. 'I've brought you to this,

Peachey,' says he. 'Brought you out of your happy life to be killed in Kafiristan, where you was late Commander-in-Chief of the Emperor's forces. Say you forgive me, Peachey.' 'I do,' says Peachey. 'Fully and freely do I forgive you, Dan.' 'Shake hands, Peachey,' says he. 'I'm going now.' Out he goes, looking neither right nor left, and when he was plumb in the middle of those dizzy dancing ropes, 'Cut, you beggars,' he shouts; and they cut, and old Dan fell, turning round and round and round, twenty thousand miles, for he took half an hour to fall till he struck the water, and I could see his body caught on a rock with the gold crown close beside.

"But do you know what they did to Peachey between two pine trees? They crucified him, Sir, as Peachey's hands will show. They used wooden pegs for his hands and his feet, and he didn't die. He hung there and screamed, and they took him down next day, and said it was a miracle that he wasn't dead. They took him down—poor old Peachey that hadn't done them any harm—that hadn't done them any . . . "

He rocked to and fro and wept bitterly, wiping his eyes with the back of his scarred hands and moaning like a child for some ten minutes.

"They was cruel enough to feed him up in the temple, because they said he was more of a God than old Daniel that was a man. Then they turned him out on the snow, and told

him to go home, and Peachey came home in about a year, begging along the roads quite safe; for Daniel Dravot he walked before and said:—'Come along, Peachey. It's a big thing we're doing.' The mountains they danced at night, and the mountains they tried to fall on Peachey's head, but Dan he held up his hand, and Peachey came along bent double. He never let go of Dan's hand, and he never let go of Dan's head. They gave it to him as a present in the temple, to remind him not to come again, and though the crown was pure gold, and Peachey was starving, never would Peachey sell the same. You knew Dravot, Sir! You knew Right Worshipful Brother Dravot! Look at him now!"

He fumbled in the mass of rags round his bent waist; brought out a black horsehair bag embroidered with silver thread, and shook therefrom on to my table—the dried, withered head of Daniel Dravot! The morning sun that had long been paling the lamps struck the red beard and blind sunken eyes; struck, too, a heavy circlet of gold studded with raw turquoises, that Carnehan placed tenderly on the battered temples.

"You behold now," said Carnehan, "the Emperor in his habit as he lived—the King of Kafiristan with his crown upon his head. Poor old Daniel that was a monarch once!"

I shuddered, for, in spite of defacements manifold, I recognized the head of the man of Marwar Junction. Carnehan rose to go.

I attempted to stop him. He was not fit to walk abroad. "Let me take away the whisky, and give me a little money," he gasped. "I was a King once. I'll go to the Deputy Commissioner and ask to set in the Poorhouse till I get my health. No, thank you, I can't wait till you get a carriage for me. I've urgent private affairs—in the south—at Marwar."

He shambled out of the office and departed in the direction of the Deputy Commissioner's house. That day at noon I had occasion to go down the blinding hot Mall, and I saw a crooked man crawling along the white dust of the roadside, his hat in his hand, quavering dolorously after the fashion of street-singers at Home. There was not a soul in sight, and he was out of all possible earshot of the houses. And he sang through his nose, turning his head from right to left:—

"The Son of Man goes forth to war,
A golden crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar—
Who follows in his train?"

I waited to hear no more, but put the poor wretch into my carriage and drove him off to the nearest missionary for eventual transfer to the Asylum. He repeated the hymn twice while he was with me whom he did not in the least recognize, and I left him singing it to the missionary.

Two days later I inquired after his welfare of the Superintendent of the Asylum.

"He was admitted suffering from sunstroke. He died early yesterday morning," said the Superintendent. "Is it true that he was half an hour bareheaded in the sun at midday?"

"Yes," said I, "but do you happen to know if he had anything upon him by any chance when he died?"

"Not to my knowledge," said the Superintendent.

And there the matter rests.

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